Daily Report

Latin America

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FBIS-LAT-89-237 *12 December 1989*

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Events on Final Day of Summit; Declaration Read

Draft of Declaration Submitted

PA1112170789 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1604 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 11 Dec (DPA)—The second day of the summit began today with the five protagonists visibly pessimistic.

During the three rounds of talks on the summit's first day, consensus was not reached on the main points under discussion, such as the situation in El Salvador and Nicaragua, the demobilization of the Nicaraguan Resistance (RN), withdrawal of Nicaragua's suit against Honduras in The Hague, and the activities of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA). The Salvadoran president insists that the five Central American presidents must condemn the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) because of its latest "inhuman offensive against the Salvadoran people."

Nicaragua wants the general condemnation to include the Salvadoran Army, a demand that El Salvador rejects. Regarding the RN's demobilization, President Ortega said that this must be done right away because the deadline expired on 5 December and Honduran President Jose Azcona said that this demobilization is not the responsibility of Honduras, but ONUCA and that no Honduran soldier will participate in the demobilization.

Regarding Nicaragua's suit against Honduras in The Hague, which was reinstituted 4 days ago, the Nicaraguan Government has indicated that the reinstatement is a result of Honduras' failure to comply with the demobilization within the deadline agreed to at the last summit in Tela, Honduras, which was 5 December.

This morning, Costa Rican President Oscar Arias and Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo submitted an overall draft of a joint declaration that includes the following points:

1. That the Salvadoran Government pledges to establish a cease-fire beginning tomorrow;

2. That the FMLN pledges to resume the dialogue with the Salvadoran Government beginning on 20 December;

3. That the summit condemn the FMLN because of its offensive;

4. That Nicaragua suspend its suit at The Hague against Honduras and that steps be taken to demobilize the RN;

5. That a direct appeal be made to the United States, the Soviet Union, and Cuba to stop intervening in Central America.

UN Support May Be Sought

PA1112184889 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1717 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 11 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—President Oscar Arias, host of the presidential summit, said that the five Central American presidents are studying the possibility of requesting UN support to get Cuba, Europe, the Soviet Union, and the United States to cooperate in helping to achieve peace in Central America.

He said: "We want to ask UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to help us. He has the authority to convoke those governments who are interested in cooperating to solve these problems." The president and 1987 Nobel Prize winner said: "We can mention some European countries, the two superpowers, and Cuba, but that would be up to him (Perez de Cuellar)."

President Arias made brief statements shortly before entering a Catholic church, where the other four presidents were waiting for him to attend mass.

Honduran President Jose Azcona expressed his "faith that we will make progress" and be able to overcome the deterioration of the regional peace plan.

Meanwhile, Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo said on entering the church that the situation is "quite difficult" and that the presidents are working on a project that will probably be announced today.

Arias, who said that the meeting will end today, "although very late," said that he hopes "we will succeed." Arias admitted that yesterday the debates had been "quite tense and with strong positions."

Arias, who said that the purpose of the meeting is to "redirect the peace process," pointed out that "we have said many important things frankly, sincerely, and openly."

Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani was the first to arrive at the church. He was followed by Azcona, Daniel Ortega, Cerezo, and Arias.

The presidents declined to provide details on what topics they had discussed on 10 December during the 1st day of the 6th presidents meeting, which was convoked urgently to try to curb the increased violence in the area, especially in El Salvador, where about 3,000 people were killed last month.

However, sources from the delegations accompanying the presidents said that the debates had centered on the Salvadoran internal conflict and the Salvadoran Armed Forces' charge that Nicaragua was involved in the conflict.

It is expected that today the presidents will discuss the problem of demobilizing the Nicaraguan "contras" stationed in Honduras. This is another source of tension in Central America.

Ortega Comments on Discussions

PA1112211489 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1954 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 11 Dec (DPA)—Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega said today that the Central American summit being held in San Jose is experiencing "difficult moments" and that the discussions are directed at achieving "concrete agreements in specific matters" regarding the demobilization of the anti-Sandinist contras who are in Honduras and human rights in El Salvador.

Ortega made these statements shortly before the beginning of the second day of talks with his Central American counterparts at the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture [IICA], located approximately 5 km from San Jose.

Ortega said that he feels the meeting is "complicated," even though there is a will to continue working toward peace for the convulsed Central American region. He added that the peace process must continue to advance, despite what he described as difficult situations.

Meanwhile, Nicaraguan Deputy Defense Minister Major General Joaquin Cuadra said that the Central American presidents are discussing the demobilization of the anti-Sandinists from a political and not a military standpoint. Cuadra added that the biggest problem regarding the demobilization of the contras is that there is a lack of political will by the U.S. Government. He recalled that the United States is financially supporting the anti-Sandinists at the camps in Honduras and is using the humanitarian aid approved by the U.S. Congress to hinder the demobilization.

President Daniel Ortega, who attended a mass at the San Isidro Church in San Isidro today, seems to be willing to discuss a proposal presented by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias on holding talks regarding the Central American crisis at levels that will include Cuba, the USSR, and the United States.

No Direct Condemnation of FMLN

PA1112224089 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2201 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 11 Dec (DPA)— The five Central American presidents meeting at the San Isidro Coronado summit will not sign a document directly condemning the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), it has been learned here this afternoon.

Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani requested this condemnation on 10 December during the first round of talks. At the same time, he accused Nicaragua of providing weapons to the FMLN and of violating the Esquipulas II agreements.

It has been reported that the presidents will sign a declaration late this afternoon that will contain a broad paragraph on actions of groups similar to the FMLN. The FMLN is not mentioned however.

The aforementioned paragraph will state the following: "The five Central American presidents hereby express their vehement condemnation of the destabilizing actions by insurrectional groups against governments legally established in Central America."

Reportedly, Nicaragua was opposed to directly mentioning the FMLN and only condemning them. Thus, this general statement was agreed to.

Azcona Wants Contras Out

PA1212022389 Paris AFP in Spanish 0004 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 11 Dec (AFP)—Honduran President Jose Azcona has told his Central American colleagues, who are meeting in this capital, to ask the United States to stop sending aid to the 13,000 Nicaraguan contras based in Honduran territory, official sources have reported.

Azcona made the request during the working meeting held in the Costa Rican capital today for the second consecutive day by the presidents of Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica, Marco Tulio Romero, Honduran Presidency spokesman, has said.

Romero, who was interviewed by the media as he was leaving the session hall of the presidents, said that everyone in his country, "all the way from the country's president to the last Honduran," seeks the departure of the Nicaraguan rebels.

"If the contras do not want to go to Nicaragua because they claim there are no conditions for their return, then the U.S. Government should fly them to Miami in a helicopter, but we no longer want them in Honduras," he said.

The official also talked about Azcona's position of "not allowing the blood of any Honduran soldier to be shed in driving the contras out of the country."

Asked about the accusation by the Nicaraguan Government that Honduras allows the presence of Nicaraguan rebels on its territory in violation of the Tela agreements signed by the Central American presidents last August, Romero asserted that the rebels remain in his country "because the area governments have not shown enough interest in getting them out."

Romero said that Honduras has abided by the Tela Agreements until now. he added that all the area presidents and the continuation of the U.S. economic aid for the contras are to blame for the anti-Sandinist rebels not being demobilized.

Romero said that Honduras' position is clear. The contras "should not remain on Honduran territory, further worsening Honduras' internal situation."

Similarly, Romero added that this afternoon's discussions among the five Central American presidents centered around the Salvadoran conflict and the search for a cease-fire in that country.

According to Romero, the Central American presidential summit, which began on Sunday, 10 December, may conclude in the next few hours with a "positive agreement that will exceed expectations" and that will allow the continuation of the peace process that began in August 1987.

Basic Agreements Reportedly Reached

PA1212020389 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 0117 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 11 Dec (DPA)—The five Central American presidents who are meeting in the summit tonight reached basic agreements on pacification in the region.

Costa Rican Information Minister Jorge Urbina announced at 1730 (Central American time) that the presidents had reached a consensus on 70 percent of the points being discussed.

Urbina announced that the five presidents will sign a joint declaration at 2100. The presidents are meeting at the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Cooperation (IICA) in San Isidro de Coronado, 5 km from San Jose.

Although Urbina did not give the points on which a consensus has been reached, official sources told DPA that those points are as follows:

1. A cease-fire in El Salvador: There will be a cease-fire in El Salvador as of 15 December, and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the Salvadoran Government will immediately begin talks. If feasible, U.S. and USSR delegates will attend these sessions. To achieve that cease-fire, both parties (the FMLN and the Salvadoran Government) will commit themselves to issuing instructions to their military troops so the agreement will be effective.

2. Demobilization: Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega agreed to accept a new date for the demobilization of the Nicaraguan resistance (contras). The new date is 15 January 1990. The new date is accompanied by President Ortega's warning that this will be the last date set up for the demobilization of the contra movement, and, for that reason, the new deadline will not be extended because the demobilization process should have been completed by 5 December 1989.

The Honduran Government committed itself to providing its good offices for the fulfillment of the demobilization process and to provide all possible favorable conditions to the UN forces that will work for that purpose.

3. Condemnation: The five presidents condemn before the world the destabilizing actions of rebel groups (contras, FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front], and the URNG [Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity] of Guatemala), which attack the legitimately established governments of their corresponding countries.

Other agreements: A. To ask the FMLN to cease hostilities.

B. To ask El Salvador to resume relations with Nicaragua as soon as possible.

C. To ask UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to play a more active leadership role in the Central American crisis.

D. To ask the Nicaraguan Government—for the sake of the harmony that should prevail among the five Central American nations —to suspend the suit filed at the International Court of Justice at The Hague against Honduras which it resumed a few days ago.

E. To ask the Soviet Union and Cuba on the one hand, and the United States on the other, to stop helping the Central American rebel groups.

F. To ask the Group of Eight to cooperate with Central America in the search for real and lasting peace in the region.

The official statement on the results of the summit will be issued through an official joint communique that will be signed by the five Central American presidents.

It was agreed to hold an upcoming summit in Managua, Nicaragua after the Nicaraguan 25 March [date as received] elections. New Honduran President Rafael Leonardo Callejas will attend the summit in Managua and the Costa Rican president-elect, who will have been elected by that time—either Rafael Angel Calderon or Carlos Manuel Castillo—will also attend the Managua summit as special guests.

Azcona Departs Unexpectedly

PA1212044289 Paris AFP in Spanish 0425 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 12 Dec (AFP)—Official sources have confirmed that Honduran President Jose Azcona unexpectedly left the room tonight where the Central American presidents had been meeting for the summit that began on 10 December.

Melvin Saenz, a Costa Rican Foreign Ministry spokesman, said that Azcona left the summit site at approximately 0340 GMT, but he said he does not know whether the Honduran president will return to the summit in the next few minutes.

Azcona's departure reportedly occurred when the presidents were discussing the withdrawal of a suit filed by Nicaragua against Honduras at the International Court of Justice in The Hague for accepting the contras in its territory.

Another government source told AFP that Azcona "did not want to sign the final declaration, and that is why he left the summit."

Costa Rican Minister Gives Update

PA1212065889 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 0625 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Statement by Costa Rican Information Minister Jorge Urbina in San Isidro, Coronado, Costa Rica—live]

[Text] Good evening to you all. This is not going to be a news conference. I do not intend to hold a question and answer period. I would simply like to inform you of what is happening right now, what kind of progress has been made, and what we are waiting for now.

After 2 days of work, the Costa Rican, Salvadoran, Guatemalan, and Nicaraguan presidents are still meeting on the top floor of this building.

The presidents have reached a basic agreement on practically all of the points that were under discussion, except for the one dealing with the Nicaraguan suit filed against Honduras at the International Court of Justice.

The disagreement on what the presidents of those two countries want or can do caused President Azcona's departure from the summit, as you know.

After President Azcona left, the remaining four presidents tried to get him to return to the working session. The remaining presidents have tried to come up with a feasible alternative that could be agreed upon both by the Honduran and the Nicaraguan Governments.

As per precise instructions of President Azcona, we are waiting for the arrival of Honduran Foreign Minister Carlos Lopez Contreras, who should arrive any time now. President Azcona has at least told us that there is a chance he may rejoin the summit after his foreign minister discusses the possible solutions to the existing disagreement with the area's remaining foreign ministers.

I hope that you, as representatives of the media, understand that the situation in Central America, since the signing of the Esquipulas II Agreements, has never been so tense. Never has so much been expected from a meeting, never has it been necessary to confront, or rather talk, in a such a serious climate as during the situation we are facing at this time. This is something that is mandated by the circumstances. We hope President Azcona will return as soon as possible. Undoubtedly this is not the first time that we all have had to stay awake until the first hours of the day. I think that will happen today. However, we have confidence that the text of some documents that have been sent to the Cariari Hotel, where President Azcona is, have brought us closer to a solution to this impass in the negotiations among the presidents.

I beg you to excuse the lack of information during the past 2 hours. However, we have carefully assessed the possibility of briefing you. I beg you to have more patience. We hope that in a few hours we will be able to present the result of the presidents' work. Thank you very much for your understanding.

Azcona Returns; Hague Suit Suspended

PA1212082389 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0750 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 12 Dec (ACAN - EFE) — Honduran President Jose Azcona returned early in the morning to the Central American summit from which he was absent for almost 4 hours because of disagreements with his Nicaraguan counterpart Daniel Ortega.

Sources from the Honduran delegation maintained that Azcona had agreed to return to the meeting after all the presidents made a commitment to freeze the suit filed by Nicaragua against Honduras at the International Court of Justice at the Hague for 6 months.

With Azcona's return, the presidents are putting the finishing touches on the declaration, the main points of which are the immediate start of the contras' dismantling, a condemnation of the Salvadoran guerrillas offensive, an appeal for the cessation of warring actions in El Salvador, and an exhortation to the Salvadoran Government and guerrillas to resume the dialogue.

Arias Reads Final Declaration

PA1212100089 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 0904 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Final declaration of the Central American summit held in San Isidro de Coronado, Costa Rica; read by Costa Rican President Ocar Arias—live]

[Text] The presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua gathered at a special meeting in San Isidro de Coronado, Costa Rica, on 10, 11, and 12 December 1989 with the goals of examining the delicate Central American situation, which is seriously affecting the peace process, and ratifying the agreement contained in the preamble of the Esquipulas II agreement, especially those points by which they fully assumed the historic challenge of forging peace for Central America through the eradication of war and the prevalence of dialogue over violence, and reason over resentment.

With those intentions, the presidents approved the following:

1. To confirm their most vigorous condemnation of the armed and terrorist actions conducted by rebel forces in the region and to reiterate their deep conviction that it is necessary to make the people aware that the use of force and terror to attain political goals and objectives must be ruled out.

2. The Costa Rican, Guatemalan, Honduran, and Nicaraguan presidents expressed their solid support for Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani and for his government as faithful proof of their unwavering policy to support governments resulting from democratic, pluralist, and participative processes.

3. The Guatemalan, Honduran, Nicaraguan, and Costa Rican presidents support the Salvadoran Government in its reiterated intention of finding a solution to the Salvadoran conflict through peaceful and democratic means. Within that context, the presidents reiterated their vehement call to the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] for an immediate and effective cessation of hostilites in that fraternal nation and for its reincorporation into the dialogue process that had already began.

Similarly, the presidents vehemently demand that the FMLN give up all types of violent actions that directly or indirectly affect the civilian population.

The five Central American presidents decided to very kindly ask the UN secretary general to have as much input as possible in conducting the necessary actions for the resumption of the dialogue between the Salvadoran Government and the FMLN, thus contributing to the dialogue's successful development.

4. The presidents state that in accordance with the Alajuela, Costa del Sol, and Tela declarations, the provisions included in Chapter I and III of the Joint Plan for Demobilization are a common and indivisible whole. Consequently, the presidents ask the International Commission of Support and Verification, CIAV, to immediately begin working for the demobilization of the FMLN in accordance with the procedures established in the aforementioned plan.

5. The presidents give their support to the Nicaraguan Government of President Daniel Ortega so the funds approved for the Nicaraguan Resistance [RN] are delivered to the CIAV after the signing of the present agreement for the purpose of implementing the process of voluntary demobilization, repatriation, or relocation to Nicaragua and third countries [con el proposito de ejecutar el proceso de desmobilizacion, repatriacion, o reubicacion voluntarias hacia Nicaragua y terceros paises] of the RN members and their relatives.

The presidents make an appeal to the RN to cease all kinds of actions against the electoral process and the civilian population so the electoral process develops in a climate of normalcy, in accordance with the Esquipulas II Agreements.

6. The implementation of the process to demobilize the RN and the FMLN is a fundamental factor in overcoming the crisis that the peace process is in at this time. Therefore, ONUCA [UN Observer Group in Central America] should speed up its activities to prevent the supply of weapons to the FMLN and to the RN.

7. The Nicaraguan Government reiterates its offer to the RN made in Washington D.C., United States of America, to make the pertinent efforts so those who are repatriated prior to 5 February 1990 may register to vote in the general elections to be held on 25 February 1990. The Nicaraguan Government will immediately make the corresponding contacts with ONUCA and the CIAV so the process of demobilizing the RN forces in Honduras begins after this agreement has been signed, in accordance with that established in the Tela agreement.

8. [The presidents] reiterated the importance of international cooperation as a parallel and fundamental element in the political efforts for peace in the area, and urged the international community to increase their support. They also expressed the regional desire to continue the joint work in this sector, convinced that economic and social development is a constant in our efforts to attain peace. The presidents expressed appreciation for the progress attained through the special plan for Central America approved by the PNUD [UN Program for Development] in this regard, and for the EEC support and cooperation after the Luxemburg Agreements.

9. The Central American presidents, in accordance with the Esquipulas II Agreements, ratified their commitment to fully respect human rights, including civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights established in their pertinent constitutions and in the international agreements signed and ratified.

10. The presidents agreed to request that the UN secretary general establish the necessary ties to involve the states that have interests in the area more directly in the peace efforts within the framework of the Esquipulas II Agreements and the declarations that followed. Likewise, they request that the ONUCA mandate be extended to include the verification of the cease-fire and demobilization process of rebel forces that may take place in the region.

11. In view of the recent events, the presidents confirmed the complete [word indistinct] of the mechanism of ONUCA is of utmost urgency for the implementation of the commitments included in numbers 5 and 6 of the Esquipulas II Agreements. By virtue of that, they decided to also request that the UN secretary general adopt the necessary measures to accelerate ONUCA's operation and that it keep the Central American presidents notified.

12. Based on the commitment to find negotiated solutions to overcome the conflicts that may arise, the presidents of Guatemala, Honduras, and Costa Rica fraternally encourage the presidents of El Salvador and Nicaragua to hold a dialogue and negotiations to end their dispute. They are also urged to resume their diplomatic and consular relations.

13. Concerning the suit filed by the Nicaraguan Government against the Honduran Government at the International Court of Justice regarding the border specifications and armed actions, the presidents of those

governments agree to create a commission with bilateral representatives who will seek, within a 6-month deadline of this date, a judicial settlement for that conflict. To facilitate the work of the commission, they also agree to give instructions to their respective delegates on the suit so, together or separately, they will immediately notify the court of the agreement. By just presenting the agreement, the delegates will be granted full validity and they must set a date for presenting the Honduran counterproposal prior to 11 June 1990.

Likewise, in the event that by that date no judicial settlement has been reached, they agree with the representatives of all of the countries that the deadline granted to the Honduran Government for presenting a counterproposal will be 6 months.

The Central American presidents thank the Costa Rican people and government for their hospitality and thank all the men and women who contributed to the achievements of this meeting.

By virtue of this and certain of the implementation, they agree to meet again during the first quarter of 1990 during a meeting to be held in Managua, Nicaragua.

San Isidro de Coronado, 12 December 1989.

[Signed] Oscar Arias Sanchez, president of the Republic of Costa Rica; Alfredo Cristiani Burkard, president of the Republic of El Salvador; Vinicio Cerezo Arevalo, president of the Republic of Guatemala; Jose Azcona Hoyo, president of the Republic of Honduras; and Daniel Ortega Saavedra, president of the Republic of Nicaragua. [applause]

Ortega Speaks to Reporters

PA1212112889 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 0919 GMT 12 Dec 89

[News conference by Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega with local and foreign reporters in San Isidro de Coronado, Costa Rica—live]

[Text] [Reporter] Commander Ortega, can you please give us your opinion about what has happened here tonight?

[Ortega] We succeeded in overcoming a quite complex situation. We have given new strength to the peace plan. In other words, to those who thought that the peace plan was falling apart and that it was being ruined, we have proved here that it is still in effect.

[Reporter] If you had to point to the most important part of this summit, which part would you point to?

[Ortega] I would point to the fact that at an extremely critical time we succeeded in revitalizing an agreement that was signed over 2 years ago and that has had its ups and downs. [Words indistinct]

[Reporter] You signed an explicit support for President Cristiani and for the Salvadoran Government. In Nicaragua, you recently attacked the Salvadoran Government. How do you explain that change in attitude?

[Ortega] The Esquipulas agreement is based on the principle of recognition of the existing Central American governments. Thus, it was only logical that we would overcome previous problems at this summit. It was logical that we would emphasize that principle here, which is one of the Esquipulas agreement's essential elements.

[Reporter] Thus, have you asked the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] to demobilize and to cease hostilities?

[Ortega] The agreement is very clear in that respect. It cites the peace plan, which in its point regarding the demobilization process states that we must seek peaceful solutions to the Central American conflicts.

[Reporter] President, does the declaration say how the contra movement will be demobilized?

[Ortega] The agreement says that the contra movement must be demobilized in accordance with the Tela agreement and that for this purpose we must begin to work with CIAV [International Commission of Support and Verification] and ONUCA [UN Observer Group in Central America] immediately after the signing of this declaration to immediately demobilize the contra movement.

[Reporter] Will the demobilization take place 90 days from today?

[Ortega] The contra demobilization was supposed to have taken place as of the signing of the Tela agreement. We must take into account that the deadline set up for the demobilization of the contra movement already expired. The deadline was 5 December. We are now setting a new deadline beginning today.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Ortega] We must cooperate with ONUCA and CIAV for them to immediately start working on the dismantling of the contra movement in accordance with the Tela agreement.

[Reporter] What will the Nicaraguan Government do if the agreements are not abided by again?

[Ortega] We will wait. We will first wait for compliance with what we signed here today.

[Reporter] President, in the hallways of this building it had been said—and the declaration seems to confirm it—that Nicaragua somehow sold out the FMLN in exchange for the demobilization of the contras. [Words indistinct] interpretation?

[Ortega] Nicaragua is simply confirming here what it signed in August 1987 regarding the fact that it is

essential and necessary to seek peaceful and negotiated solutions to regional conflicts.

We, the Central American presidents, are very clear in the declaration regarding the FMLN. We asked the UN secretary general to provide its good offices and to work in favor of a dialogue leading to a peaceful solution of the Salvadoran conflict.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] ask the FMLN to surrender its weapons and to demobilize, Mr. President? [Words indistinct] that peace is closer?

[Ortega] I would not say the situation has been solved. The conflicts are still there, but the main thing is that there is willingness to work in favor of peace. The FMLN has made very clear statements in favor of a negotiated and peaceful solution.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] the news conference tomorrow [words indistinct].

[Ortega] This is my news conference.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] the results of this summit?

[Ortega] Of course.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] triumph for Cristiani's government?

[Ortega] I believe this is a triumph for the Central American peoples who want peace.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] ask the FMLN to give up their weapons at this time?

[Ortega] The declaration specifically talks about mechanisms to seek peaceful solutions to armed conflicts in Central America. The FMLN has stated its wish to seek a negotiated solution to the conflict. The FMLN has clearly stated that it does not favor war and that it favors a negotiated solution.

Thus, I find points of agreement between what the FMLN says and what we have said here in this declaration regarding peaceful and negotiated solutions to conflicts in Central America.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Ortega] I hope the U.S. Government will respect what we have stated here today, especially matters regarding the allocation of funds. We have clearly stated here that those funds should be allocated to CIAV as soon as possible, immediately, as soon as possible. The United States has allocated $30 million and other unknown sums of money for the contra movement. We have stated here that those funds should be immediately allocated to CIAV. We hope the United States abides by that part of the commitment and that it respects the agreement signed by the Central American presidents.

The contra demobilization, which should begin immediately, must not be sabotaged by the United States, which has been determined to maintain the contra movement until after February 1990.

[Reporter] I am from Channel 13 from Costa Rica. What about the counterrevolution and the electoral process, which Nicaragua has maintained with determination?

[Ortega] It has assassinated FSLN municipal candidates and FSLN activists, and it is sowing terror in rural areas. This logically hinders the normal development of the electoral process.

[Reporter] Does this endanger the electoral process that will end in February? The Central American presidents have made an appeal for the Nicaraguan process to be as clean and honest as possible.

[Ortega] The Nicaraguan electoral process will be clean and honest because the Nicaraguan people desire it to be so. What the presidents have done is to support it. The appeal we are making here urges the contras to cease their terrorist actions against the Nicaraguan people so the electoral process can be carried out with normalcy. Regarding the attacks on the civilian population, I have pointed out to the Central American presidents the issue of releasing those who have been kidnapped, because many have been kidnapped by the counterrevolution. I have stressed to the Central American presidents the need for the contras to release the kidnapped.

[Reporter] What about the participation of extraregional forces, which undoubtedly intervene in the peace process?

[Ortega] Well, we want this agreement to be supported and respected. The United States especially should effectively support and respect this agreement and stop sabotaging it.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Ortega] We are making efforts [words indistinct].

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Ortega] We already held elections in Nicaragua in 1984 amid the war. Therefore, we will hold elections in 1990.

[Reporter] What is your opinion of the USSR proposal to be guarantor along with the United States [words indistinct]?

[Ortega] The USSR and the United States should be guarantors concerning the supply of weapons in Central America. This will permit the establishment of a regional balance of forces in Central America and a halt to the arms buildup in Central America.

[Reporter] What about the call for a truce in El Salvador?

[Ortega] I believe there are very important points, taking as a point of departure a specific and realistic action. For example, we have the fact that we are calling the UN

secretary general to conduct efforts so a dialogue is held in El Salvador and so a negotiated solution can be attained to solve the Salvadoran conflict. Therefore, I believe that this is a very significant and substantial element.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] this declaration for the FMLN?

[Ortega] Not at all. I believe this is a harsh blow for those in favor of war and violence and for those in favor of disrespect for the Central American people and human rights. I believe we are working here to make a concerted effort among all political and social forces, among all forces in Central America that are truly in favor of attaining a negotiated solution to conflicts.

[Reporter] You said the Salvadoran Government is a government of assassins. However, you are signing a document here that says it is a legitimate government that deserves all your support.

[Ortega] You must have noted what was being said regarding Nicaragua a few days ago in El Salvador. We met here in an attempt to overcome situations that have occurred. If we had wanted to fight, we would not have met. If we are meeting, it is because we want to overcome the existing problems. We have found points of agreement regarding the peace plan. We have found those points of agreement not only among the governments, but also with the negotiation proposals presented by the FMLN. The FMLN has clearly stated that they do not favor war, they favor democratization and peace. Therefore, I believe that regarding this there are points of agreement that should be noted.

Joint Declaration Issued on Trifinio Border Plan

PA1112161689 Guatemala City EL GRAFICO in Spanish 13 Nov 89 p 5

[Text] Guatemala City, 13 November—At the conclusion of a meeting held on 10-11 November in the cities of Metapan in El Salvador, Nueva Ocotepeque in Honduras, and Esquipulas in Guatemala, an appeal was made to the international financial community and friendly countries to continue to support the execution of the Trifinio Trinational Regional Border Development Plan.

Salvadoran Vice President Francisco Merino, Guatemalan Vice President Roberto Carpio Nicolle, and Acting Honduran President Alfredo Fortin Inestroza signed a joint declaration asking the Trifinio region residents to actively and enthusiastically help carry out the plan.

The officials signed important resolutions during the meeting. Over the short term, the resolutions will benefit residents of 15 Guatemalan, 22 Honduran, and 8 Salvadoran municipalities.

Here is the text of the Joint Declaration, because of its importance:

Joint Declaration by the vice presidents of El Salvador and Guatemala and the acting Honduran president as members of the Trinational Commission for the Trifinio Plan after meeting at Metapan in El Salvador, Esquipulas in Guatemala, and Nueva Ocotepeque in Honduras on 10-11 November 1989.

Whereas;

We have received the 14 October 1988 final report and the 15 October 1988 Trifinio Trinational Regional Border Development Plan from the OAS and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture, IICA. The report and the plan are based on the Technical Cooperation Agreement between the governments of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, the OAS General Secretariat, and the IICA, that was signed on 12 November 1986. The purpose of this agreement was to design a joint regional development plan.

At the 10-11 November meeting, a letter of understanding between the three governments, the OAS, and the IICA to continue studies and to implement the joint projects and plans was reviewed and signed.

The documents that make up the plan, presented by the multinational technical team, will provide important material with which specific studies of several projects can be made and other projects can be implemented immediately.

To formulate this plan the technical and financial support of the OAS, the IICA, and the EEC has been essential.

The execution of the Trifinio Trinational Regional Border Development Plan is of enormous value to the Central American integration process and the achievement of a true and lasting peace in the region.

The plan requires vast and determined political and financial support.

The formulation of this plan is a good example of what can be done in other binational or trinational border areas in the Central American region.

The process of searching for financial aid for the execution of the plan has received international technical assistance as well as generous support from friendly countries and the financial economic community.

Trinational Operation Commissions have been established by sectors to carry out the priority Trifinio Plan programs and projects.

We resolve to express;

1. Great satisfaction over the fact that the Trifinio Plan and its complementary studies were completed within the stipulated time frame and according to the planned objectives and goals.

2. Our appreciation to the OAS, the IICA, and the EEC for the support given to this first phase of the plan, as

well as to all the professionals and technicians of the countries involved in drafting the plan.

3. Our appreciation to the EEC, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, the UN Rotating Fund for the Exploration of Natural Resources, the UN Development Program, the Inter-American Development Bank; the Central American Bank of Economic Integration; and the governments of Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, France, and Italy, for the positive answers given to requests for financing for the preparation and implementation of the projects of the plan.

4. Our firm determination to continue giving all the political support needed to the different phases of the plan's implementation.

5. Our intention to make the experience gained from the Trifinio Plan available for use in other border zones in our own, as well as in other countries in the region.

6. Our intention to support and strengthen the Trinational Sectorial Operation Commissions so each commission can carry out the necessary coordination and implementation of the projects it is charged with.

7. Our fervent hope that the Central American Parliament will be created, installed, and become operational as soon as possible, and that it will be based on the same integration goals of the Trifinio Plan and become the most suitable and effective political framework for realization of the plan.

And finally, to make an appeal to;

The international financial community and friendly countries to continue to provide support for implementation of the plan; and

To the Trifinio region residents to actively and enthusiastically help in carrying out the plan.

Issued in the City of Nueva Ocotepeque, Honduras, on 11 November 1989.

Signed by:

Engineer Francisco Merino, Vice President of the Republic of El Salvador; Roberto Carpio Nicolle, Vice President of the Republic of Guatemala; Alfredo Fortin Inestroza, Acting President of the Republic of Honduras

Cuba

Castro Tours Havana Construction Projects

FL1100140300 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro visited several projects under construction in Havana City this Sunday. He learned directly from the construction workers about the progress of each one of them. Fidel toured the facilities being built for the Pan-American Games in Habana del Este, the Multipurpose Hall being built by Industrial Projects Construction Enterprise No 13 at Plaza de la Revolucion Municipality, the Jose Antonio Echevarria University City expansion project being built by the 13 March Contingent, a bus terminal, and the Cohiba Hotel being built by the Blas Roca Calderio Contingent workers. [Video shows Castro surrounded by various groups of workers at construction sites]

[Begin recording] [Unidentified female construction worker] Do you remember? This is the result, this is the Angolan you wanted to be born in Angola. [video shows worker pointing to a girl]

[Castro] Oh, where was it, in Angola?

[Worker] In Angola. Do you remember now? [chuckles]

[Castro] So, you were pregnant with her then.

[Worker] But, don't you remember?

[Castro] I don't remember her because I couldn't see her inside your belly, but now I can see her. [laughter]

[Worker] We met you at the Palace. This one was already 5 months old. You asked Neto [not further identified], and Neto told you that I was pregnant because I had also taken care of Neto. I asked: Is she going to have the baby here, commander? [sentence as heard] Then you said: Yes, don't Cubans and Angolans have babies here? This Cuban has to have her baby here also.

[Castro] Did you stay another year after you had the baby?

[Worker] One more year. I went as a delegate to the festival....

[Castro, interrupting] Where was your husband at the time? In Tanzania? In Vietnam?

[Worker] No, my husband was in Angola first. He was one of the first combatants who went there as military doctor. I was the one who was in Tanzania. I didn't see him for about 2 years. When the group of construction workers went with Maximo Andion [word indistinct], Risquet intervened because I had talked to him requesting that I go there. This is when I came back to....

[Castro, interrupting] What are you doing now?

[Worker] Well, I am here.... [chuckles]

[Second construction worker] She works here as a construction worker. She comes every day, and it is hard for her to leave. Sometimes I tell her: Please go home, go home and rest. Sometimes it is 2300, and she is still here.

[Castro] Do you live close by?

[Worker] I live on 23d Street. I live close by. I have committed myself to this collective. I am very proud of being with them. They have taught me a lot. I believe....

[Castro, interrupting] Where are you from? Are you from here or from some other place?

[Worker] I am from Havana, but my family was very poor. I believe that whatever I can do for the revolution is not enough, because everything my family and I have we owe to the revolution and to everything my comrades have done. I believe there is no better place to truly show whether I am revolutionary, communist, and militant and to make my contribution where the revolution really needs me. I am not talking about what I have done but about what I can continue giving. I believe that the only thing I could ask you is to last 100 years for us so you can continue to show us the path to follow, because this revolution truly needs you. [Video shows Castro embracing worker] [Crowd cheers: Long live our commander in chief! Viva! Long live the revolution! Viva!] [end recording]

Concept of Unemployment Introduced in Poland

FL1112162489 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1504 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] The Polish Government's Economic Committee has approved a bill introducing the unemployment concept to be implemented in the country soon. The document defines the legal basis which, supposedly, will guarantee the unemployed person certain living conditions until he finds another job. This phenomenon had not existed in Poland for the last 40 years.

For its part, the national organization of Polish labor unions noted that there should be regulations to give official protection to a worker who becomes unemployed, including the possibility of being retrained for a new job.

The new bill also regulates the way in which the Poles will work abroad and equals the rights of those who work for the state with the ones who emigrate to work.

PRC Foreign Trade Minister Arrives in Havana

FL1212020689 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Text] Zheng Tuobin, the PRC minister of foreign economic relations and trade, arrived today in Cuba at the head of a delegation to attend the second meeting of the joint commission on economic cooperation.

Ricardo Cabrisas, Cuban minister of foreign trade; Ernesto Melendez, minister president of the State Committee for Economic Cooperation; and other officials met the PRC delegation at the Jose Marti airport.

Zheng expressed his confidence that the round of talks will yield excellent results, taking into account the excellent preparation of both parties. Cabrisas outlined the agenda for the 4-day visit of the PRC delegation, which is made up of 12 people. The PRC delegation will meet with Cuban leaders and ministers and will visit places of economic interest.

Shortly upon his arrival in our country, Zheng made some remarks to Cuban television.

[Begin recording] [Zheng, in Mandarin with simultaneous Spanish translation] I believe all these documents are very important. For instance, the exchange of letters for the extension of the trade agreement. This is a very important guiding document for trade between our two countries. Another document is the trade protocol, which is designed to promote further trade between China and Cuba. Another document, which I consider to be very important, is the economic cooperation agreement, which will foster economic cooperation and promote greater diversification of cooperation in the various areas. [end recording].

Dos Santos Criticizes U.S. 'Interference'

MB0912075589 Luanda Domestic Service in Portuguese 0600 GMT 9 Dec 89

[Text] Comrade Jose Eduardo dos Santos, MPLA [Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola]-Labor Party chairman and president of the People's Republic of Angola, described as mere propaganda Savimbi's recent claim that he was ready to sign a cease-fire with the Angolan Government.

The Angolan head of state reaffirmed the validity of the Gbadolite agreement of 22 June at a news conference ending his sixth friendly and working visit to the Republic of Cuba on 8 December. President Jose Eduardo dos Santos referred to that agreement, saying that African countries are finding it difficult to implement it because of U.S. interference. The Angolan head of state energetically condemned that interference in the internal affairs of the People's Republic of Angola [words indistinct] UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] puppet gang.

President Jose Eduardo dos Santos also announced that the eight African heads of state involved in the Angolan peace process will hold their next meeting in Luanda on 27 December, during which our country will present new proposals [words indistinct] the Gbadolite agreement.

Regarding the U.S. aircraft that recently crashed on Angolan territory, (?thought to have flown in) from the Republic of Zaire, President Jose Eduardo dos Santos said that [words indistinct] had not yet made any official statement on that incident, but he added that this issue would come under discussion at the forthcoming Luanda meeting of the eight African heads of state involved in the Angolan process.

It should be noted that Comrade President Jose Eduardo dos Santos left Havana yesterday for home. His return flight was scheduled to include a stopover in Sal City, Cape Verde.

Dos Santos Comments on Relations With U.S.

MB1012202089 Luanda Domestic Service in Portuguese 1900 GMT 10 Dec 89

[Text] The Washington administration is the one hindering the establishment of diplomatic relations between the People's Republic of Angola and the United States. Angolan head of state Comrade Jose Eduardo dos Santos spoke about this issue during his recent visit to Cuba, where he represented the Angolan people at the memorial service for the Cuban fighters who fell while fulfilling their internationalist missions in different corners of the world. On relations with the United States, the comrade president had this to say:

[Begin Dos Santos recording] There are contacts between the United States and the Angolan authorities. Normally, these contacts are held within the framework of the Verification Commission for the Implementation of the New York Agreements. It is during these informal contacts, outside the proceedings of this commission, that views and ideas are exchanged. It is obvious that there should be differences. As you well know, we proposed an agreement with the United States to normalize diplomatic relations and to work toward ending interference in Angola's internal affairs.

Also within this framework, we continue to hold discussions with the United States in order to end its interference in Angolan internal affairs. A number of U.S. representatives have expressed their desire to visit Luanda to discuss the peace process with the Angolan authorities. We have expressed our reservations, inasmuch as we consider the Angolan problem to be an African problem, a problem placed within an African context. The United States should abstain, and should limit itself to supporting the efforts undertaken by African countries which, with Angola, are trying to find a just solution to the problem of war. [end recording]

Soviet Envoy Denies Arms Sent to Nicaragua

PA0812141589 Mexico City Red Nacional 13 Imevision Television in Spanish 1300 GMT 8 Dec 89

[Text] USSR Ambassador Rostilav Sergeyev has said during a visit to Puebla that his country did not send any type of weapons to Nicaragua in 1989. The ambassador was handed an authentic copy of the royal charter founding the city of Puebla. The ambassador added that in his country perestroyka was a revolution inside a revolution that had allowed great changes, such as relations with the Vatican. He said that for 1990, trade between the USSR and Mexico is expected to triple.

PRI Reportedly Wins Most Michoacan Mayoralties

PA1112161289 Mexico City Red Nacional 13 Imevision Television in Spanish 1410 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] The earliest returns reported by the Municipal Electoral Committees [CME] in Michoacan reveal that the Party of the Democratic Revolution [PRD] is the second political force in the state. So far the PRD has won 21 of the 63 municipalities counted. Among the mayoralties won by the PRD are Chiquilpan, Lazaro Cardenas, and Purepero.

The State Electoral Commission [CEE] has announced that the National Action Party [PAN] won the Saguayo and Zamora mayoralties, while the Institutional Revolutionary Party [PRI] so far has won 40 mayoralties, among which the most oustanding are La Piedad, Ciudad Hidalgo, Cualcoman, Huetamo, and Zacona.

CEE President Jorge Mendoza Alvarez pointed out that the results from Morelia are not yet in. He said that so far the CEE has not received reports of regrettable incidents or damage. He admitted, however, that there were pressure groups in several municipalities.

Eduardo Estrada, president of the CME in Uruapan, announced that he has delivered documents proving the PRI's victory. According to Estrada, the PRI won Uruapan's mayoralty with 7,982 votes; the PRD followed with 7,344, and the PAN with 7,097 votes. In this area, where a total of 25,463 votes were cast, 2,202 were annulled. Mendoza Alvarez hinted that the vote count at the 103 municipalities in Michoacan will not conclude until midday.

Chile's Aylwin on Restoring Diplomatic Relations

FL1112170689 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1651 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Excerpt] Santiago, Chile, 11 Dec (NOTIMEX)—Mexico and Chile will restore relations soon. This was said by Patricio Aylwin, the most favored candidate to win Chile's presidential elections scheduled for 14 December. Aylwin told the foreign press in Chile that relations between Chile and Mexico will be restored as soon as possible. He made this statement during a news conference held on the occasion of the presidential and legislative elections, which will formally put an end to a 16-year-old military dictatorship.

Sources close to Aylwin told NOTIMEX that Mexico would be the first country with which his government would restore diplomatic relations, because Mexican foreign policy is not aligned with the East-West conflict. [passage omitted]

El Salvador

Rebels Claim Town Taken Near Ilopango Air Base

PA1112203089 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 1813 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] has seized the town of Tonacatepeque, destroyed the garrison, sabotaged the mayor's office and ANTEL [National Administration for Telecommunications] installations, and freed civilian prisoners of the paramilitary forces. The prisoners were residents of Tonacatepeque who had been taken prisoner by the troops. They have now been released by the FMLN.

The FMLN forces seized 30 rifles and war supplies. Casualties inflicted on the paramilitary forces in Tonacatepeque have been estimated at 10 dead and 15 wounded.

The fighting with the paramilitary forces in Tonacatepeque began on 10 December at 2300 and the FMLN took control of city at 0200 today, Monday. During this action, our forces attacked enemy positions that form part of the defense ring of the Ilopango Air Base. The fighting lasted 3 hours, and our forces took complete control of the town at 0200.

The Air Force provided support with AC-47 planes, Huey 500 helicopter gunships, and other aircraft, which indiscriminately bombed and strafed the population.

The results are as follows: 25 casualties and war materiel consisting of the following: 30 rifles, including M-14, Czechoslovak-made G-3, Garand, and other types. In all, 30 rifles were seized in the city. We also seized two batteries for military radios, 11,000 rounds for rifles—we repeat, 11,000 rounds for rifles—5 Claymore mines; grenades for rifles; 75 clips for rifles; canteens; and other military items like harnesses, a large number of uniforms, a substantial quantity of medicine, boots, knapsacks, and other war supplies in Altomar District in Tonacatepeque.

At 0200 our forces finished seizing control of Tonacatepeque, barely 7 km from the runway of Ilopango Air Force Base. The personnel at the enemy base had been persecuting the civilian population and had captured three residents who were released by our forces when they opened the doors to the jail where the prisoners wer being held. After seizing control of the town, our forces totally destroyed the garrison and local command post. They also partially destroyed the mayor's office and the ANTEL installations.

This has been a report from Tonacatepeque. The strategic siege of San Salvador has been expanded with this new action—the seizure of Tonacatepeque, an important position in the defense ring of Ilopango Air Force Base, located 7 km south of the city.

Reportage on Recent Government, FMLN Actions

Coprefa on FMLN Casualties

PA1112195689 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1820 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] San Salvador, 11 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—The Armed Forces Press Committee (Coprefa) has announced that the Salvadoran guerrillas suffered 29 casualties, including dead and wounded, during clashes with the Army over the past 24 hours in different parts of the country.

A military spokesman gave assurances that five Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) rebels were killed on the night of 10 December along the northern periphery of the eastern city of San Miguel, 130 km from San Salvador, in clashes with 3d Infantry Brigade troops.

One FMLN rebel was killed and another wounded during clashes on the night of 10 December with military troops on the outskirts of the Soyapango neighborhood in the northern part of San Salvador.

In other northern and northeastern parts of the Salvadoran capital between 1830 and 2200 on 10 December, strong mortar shots were heard, at times up to four per minute, while Air Force helicopters overflew the city.

The Coprefa spokesman also announced that one guerrilla was killed and four wounded in a neighborhood in the northern part of Usulutan, 168 km east of San Salvador, during a clash with 2d Infantry Brigate troops.

Another insurgent was killed in Nuevo Cuscatlan, in the southern part of San Salvador, where FMLN fighters clashed with troops from the paratrooper battalion, the spokesman added.

The official report did not indicate Army casualties in the clashes reported over the past 24 hours.

From 2300 on 10 December until 0200 today, the guerrillas also attacked Civil Defense military positions in Tonacatepeque, 16 km north of San Salvador, where they killed two Civil Defense members.

Government sources in Tonacatepeque said that the guerrillas sacked two pharmacies and several stores, of which Coprefa said it had not been informed.

The Army's war bulletin adds that 10 rebels were killed in neighborhoods located in the northern part of Zacatecoluca, in the central La Paz Department.

A Zacatecoluca peasant who arrived in San Salvador today said that "the situation on 10 December was difficult, there were shootouts during the day and night," and that the Air Force "attacked."

Meanwhile, clandestine Radio Venceremos, the FMLN's official voice, reported that over the weekend the rebels killed 1 soldier and seriously wounded 11, among them a Treasury Police officer.

The soldier died in a clash in Tejutepeque, in the northern Cabanas Department, the rebel station added, without reporting the FMLN's casualties.

The guerrillas claim, moreover, to have destroyed six primary power transmission towers between the "Cerron Grande" and "15 de Septiembre" power plants, in the northern and eastern parts of San Salvador.

Spokesmen for the Lempa River Hydroelectric Executive Commission (CEL) confirmed the destruction of the power lines to ACAN-EFE, adding that, throughout the country, nine power system structures were damaged over the past few days.

The country's power deficit is 35 percent.

Fighting Near San Salvador

PA1112174289 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1640 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] San Salvador, 11 Dec (DPA)—Military authorities have reported that, for the third day in a row, heavy battles are being waged in Tonacatepeque, approximately 14 km northeast of San Salvador.

The rebels, through their clandestine radio stations, have confirmed these reports, adding that the battles are being waged against Salvadoran Air Force troops because this area is considered an Air Force "security zone."

Clashes were also reported in Santiago and San Juan Nonualco, La Paz Department, 28 to 30 km southeast of San Salvador.

Meanwhile, in San Salvador, large areas of the city were without electricity this morning because of the rationing imposed to repair the damage caused by this weekend's sabotage actions. Yesterday afternoon the residents of San Salvador, especially in the western sector of the city, were alarmed when they heard approximately 50 explosions. Military sources later explained that soldiers were shelling rebel positions in the San Salvador Volcano area.

Communications Office Burned

PA1112193889

[Editorial Report] San Salvador Domestic Service in Spanish at 1200 GMT carries a newscast broadcast in national network that includes several reports on recent clashes with guerrillas of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN).

The first report states that "17 FMLN terrorists were killed and 5 soldiers wounded as a result of clashes over the past few hours in various parts of the country." The report states: "The Ramon Belloso Battalion reported that 10 terrorists were killed during clashes in San Laureano and San Jose Cortes in Tonacatepeque Municipality, San Salvador Department; 5 other FMLN rebels were killed during a clash with the 3d Infantry Brigade in El Transito, San Miguel Department, where guerrillas burned the ANTEL [National Administration for Telecommunications] and Municipal offices; the 2d Infantry Brigade reported that a rebel was killed as a result of a clash near the San Antonio La Bolsa Canton, Metapan Jurisdiction, Santa Ana Department, where rifles of various caliber and other war materiel were confiscated; a military detachment of the Engineers Battalion reported that troops combing the area near La Esmeralda Farm in San Vicente Department killed one terrorist during a clash in that sector."

Another report states: "The National Guard has reported that a peasant was brutally killed after he refused to feed FMLN terrorists in San Jose Guayabal, Cuscatlan Department." The same report states: "The 3d Infantry Brigade in San Miguel has reported that in view of their military inability to fight the Armed Forces, terrorists have engaged in vandalism, destroying the national economy, destabilizing the government, and harming low-income civilians." The report also says that "10 terrorists were killed during clashes in the area of San Laureano and San Jose Cortes, Tonacatepeque Jurisdiction, San Salvador Department, and war materiel was confiscated."

The next report states: "The 6th Infantry Brigade based in Usulutan reported that the Atonal Battalion clashed with FMLN rebels near the [name indistinct] farm, San Francisco Javier Jurisdiction, as a result of which war materiel was confiscated."

Another clash was reported in San Antonio de Metapan "with troops of the 2d Infantry Brigade near San Antonio La Vueltas, Metapan Jurisdiction, which resulted in one rebel killed and two wounded, and the confiscation of two clips for AK-47 rifles, one AK-47 rifle, one M-16 rifle, one radio frequency table."

Civil Defense Post Besieged

PA1112134589 San Salvador Domestic Service in Spanish 1255 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Attention Salvadoran people, this is a late news report: At 0645 today, delinquent terrorists began attacking the Civil Defense post at San Pedro Nonualco and Santa Maria Ostuma, La Paz Department, in their desperate struggle to attain power.

Rebels Report Clashes

PA1112180289 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 1248 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Today at 0030, fighting broke out in Tonacatepeque. There are reports of weapons being seized. We have learned that 20 rifles and a PRC-77 radio have been seized and a prisoner of war captured. The weapons were seized from the paramilitary forces under the command of Air Force Commander General Juan Rafael Bustillo, becuase this area is protected by the Air Force.

Honduras

Nicaraguan Helicopter Sinks Fishing Boat

PA1212002989 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0002 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 11 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—Honduras' Radio America reported today that a Sandinist helicopter has attacked and sunk a Honduran fishing boat in the Atlantic Ocean. So far, 14 survivors have been rescued, but the number of people killed and injured in the incident is still not known, according to the radio station. Radio America cited as its source Colonel Rafael Castro Arista, President Jose Azcona Hoyo's chief of security, who is in San Jose accompanying the president at the Central American summit meeting.

Azcona Notified of Incident

PA1212012989 Tegucigalp Radio America in Spanish 0039 GMT 12 Dec 89

[By Renato Alvarez, special correspondent in San Jose, Costa Rica]

[Text] This is a last-minute report. An employee of the Honduran Embassy in Costa Rica who is close to the security chief of the Honduran presidential palace reported to us a few minutes ago that a Sandinist helicopter this afternoon attacked a Honduran fishing vessel somewhere in the Altantic Ocean, off the Honduran coast. I will quote the source as saying: The fishing vessel broke in half. There are 14 survivors, and an undetermined number of dead.

[In a similar report, Panama City ACAN in Spanish at 0102 GMT on 12 December, in an item datelined Tegucigalpa, adds that along with 14 survivors, "36 are still missing."]

The report has been given to the security chief of the Honduran presidential palace who is accompanying President Jose Azcona in Costa Rica. The source told us that Honduran Vice President Alfredo Fortin reported this information to Colonel Rafael Castro Arista, security chief of the presidential palace, who notified President Azcona a few minutes ago.

Nicaragua

Helicopter Reportedly Sinks Honduran Fishing Boat

Information Minister Refutes Report

PA1212014289 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0012 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 11 Dec (ACAN - EFE)—Nicaraguan Information Minister Manuel Espinoza today emphatically denied a Honduran radio station's report that a Honduran fishing boat was attacked by a Sandinist Army helicopter.

According to Tegucigalpa's Radio America, the alleged incident occurred on the Atlantic, off Bluefields, and reportedly left an undetermined number of dead and wounded.

Espinoza said in Costa Rica, where he is accompanying President Daniel Ortega to the Central American summit, that "the report on the attack was released with the intention of interfering in the meeting of the region's presidents."

The truth is, Espinoza said, that last week a Honduran fishing boat was seized on the Atlantic because it was fishing in Nicaraguan waters, and the crew subsequently mutinied and killed a Sandinist soldier.

The minister said that "no incident occurred today."

Honduran authorities reported today that 36 people are missing, and 14 survived the attack on the fishing boat. They said the survivors have been rescued.

Defense Ministry Denies Attack

PA1212010489 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0032 GMT 12 Dec 89

[Text] Managua, 11 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—The Nicaraguan Defense Ministry denied today that a Sandinist helicopter attacked and sank a Honduran fishing boat on the Atlantic.

Citing Colonel Rafael Castro Arista, security chief of President Jose Azcona, Honduras' Radio America had reported that 14 people survived the attack but that the number of dead and injured was unknown.

An official spokesman told ACAN-EFE tonight that "on instructions from Lieutenant Colonel Rosa Pasos (director of public and foreign relations of the Defense Ministry), we state that this report is completely false."

"That is all we have to state," the source added.

Intelligence Chief on Incident

PA1212041589 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 0240 GMT 12 Dec 89

[News conference with Lieutenant Colonel Ricardo Wheelock, chief of the Military Intelligence Directorate in San Isidro, Coronado, Costa Rica—live]

[Text] [Wheelock] I thank you all for your presence here. This morning we received reports that the Sandinist People's Army [EPS] had bombed and sank several Honduran boats. We mean civilian fishing boats. I will tell you what happened.

We have very few patrol boats on the Atlantic coast, and our boats there are in charge of protecting Nicaragua's sovereignty and wealth. For many years, the Nicaraguan Air Force and the Sandinist Navy have been conducting joint operations. In other words, this is not the first time we have conducted such operations. Furthermore, we

have taped most of those operations because they require thorough training and accuracy.

During those operations, helicopters have deployed men who board most of the ships participating in the operations. In other words, helicopters follow the ships as they move along and then special Sandinist Navy forces board the ship from the air.

I will tell you what happened more or less. On 7 December we conducted an operation, basically because since November, we have detected over 30 pirate ships, in other words, ships that have neither license nor permit to fish in Nicaraguan territorial waters.

During an operation of the type I just described, our forces boarded three boats at 1020 on 7 December. The operation was carried out approximately 45 miles east of Puerto Cabezas. In other words, the three boats were boarded in this area here.

The names of the boats are ("Kerry Mac II"), "Davis Jr," "Miss Patsy," and another one called ("Tide Water") [number of boats as heard]. The boats were captured and taken to Isla del Maiz. In each boat there were five Nicaraguan soldiers, one Air Force officer, and one Navy officer. As the boats were taken to Isla del Maiz, the members of the "Miss Patsy" crew, who numbered approximately 60, mutinied against the Sandinist officers on board.

The ship's captain and a cook disarmed one of the soldiers and killed him. As a result of the confrontation, the cook was killed, but the captain was unharmed. After the mutiny was over, and at approximately 0.7 miles from Corn, I mean Isla del Maiz, the ship's captain ran the "Miss Patsy" fishing boat aground on some reef near Isla del Maiz Grande, and we were forced to, let us say, save all the people on board and take them to Corn Island.

One of the "Miss Patsy" sailors jumped off the ship, and we have been unable to find him. Of the two bodies, that of the Army officer and the cook, we have only been able to recover the cook's body because the ship sank. Most of the other people were taken to hospitals in Bluefields, and others are being held by the Sandinist Navy. That is more or less what happened.

When the "Miss Patsy" ran aground, the crew members of the other ships came to help, and during this time, apparently, the ship called "Davis Jr" managed to escape. We have been unable to find it, but we want to tell you that the following EPS officers are on that boat: Air Force First Lieutenant Victor Rodriguez Hernandez, Lt Juan Carlos Galo Tinoco, Navy sailor Jose Marcelino Reyes, and sailor Jose Rene Rodriguez.

We do not know what happened to the "Davis Jr," but we believe it returned to Honduras. That is more or less what happened. I am now ready to answer the questions that you may want to ask.

[Reporter] You do not know how many dead and wounded? You have said there are some wounded, but did not give the exact number.

[Wheelock] There are 2 dead, and some of the 45 seamen have minor injuries. They are all safe.

[Reporter] There is a report to the effect that there are only 14 survivors out of a crew of 50.

[Wheelock] That is totally false.

[Reporter] Did the Nicaraguan Air Force participate in this operation?

[Wheelock] I just finished telling you that these are joint operations, there were helicopters and patrol ships in this operation. Of course, the Air Force participated.

[Reporter] It was reported that a Nicaraguan helicopter bombed a boat and caused it to break in half.

[Wheelock] Look, I just told you that the incident took place exactly 75 miles from Puerto Cabezas. In other words, any boat that is fishing or engaging in any illegal activity is given some kind of warning. None of them were attacked in the way you said. That is totally false.

[Reporter] One of them could have been there by mistake.

[Wheelock] There has been no mistake.

[Reporter] Where is the boat?

[Wheelock] We do not know.

[Reporter] Are you looking for it?

[Wheelock] Of course we are looking for it. The boat that was given warning shots is the one that ran aground, 0.7 mile off Corn Island. The captain himself ran it aground.

[Reporter] So, according to your information, only two people have been killed.

[Wheelock] One officer of the Sandinist People's Army and one cook.

[Reporter] The crew members were Hondurans?

[Wheelock] Yes, they were Hondurans, and they were illegally fishing in Nicaraguan territorial waters.

[Reporter] There were four boats?

[Wheelock] Yes, exactly four. We have three boats.

[Reporter] How many people have been arrested in your country?

[Wheelock] I do not know exactly, but I believe there are approximately 50.

[Reporter] Is this going to be discussed with Honduras here at the summit?

[Wheelock] This has nothing to do with the summit. This is a problem that has to be discussed with the appropriate authorities. It is as if someone had been involved in an aviation accident or something else. This will be done through the regular channels. I must note that piracy has increased to the point that there were 30 boats there this month.

[Reporter] About the four Sandinist soldiers that were in the "Davis Jr" and whom you say have disappeared....

[Wheelock, interrupting] I believe they will be found somewhere in Honduras. That is my personal opinion.

[Reporter] If this happened on 7 December, why wasn't anything said until today?

[Wheelock] What do you mean, we had not said anything? We are here.

[Reporter] Right.

[Wheelock] Go to Nicaragua, and there you will get the same information. Of course, you will be told.

[Reporter] The Nicaraguan information minister denied this report.

[Wheelock] I do not know about that.

[Reporter] Exactly how many people are wounded?

[Wheelock] I just told you about four or five times that there are a few wounded, not seriously though. They are out of danger and well.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]. How about the Sandinist soldiers that allegedly [words indistinct]. No Sandinist soldiers are being held by the crew of that boat?

[Wheelock] That is what I said. Furthermore, one of the boats with 50 crew members has shown up in Honduras, and it is what is causing this problem.

[Reporter] There are some problems with some Colombians concerning contraband, right?

[Wheelock] We are there to protect the fishing resources and to prevent any type of drug trafficking, gunrunning, or any merchandise contraband.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]. How did the mutiny occur?

[Wheelock] From the time they were captured and on the way to Corn Island, one of the officers on board was careless. Then, the cook and the captain disarmed one of the soldiers, took away his rifle, and killed him. The crew then availed itself of this incident to rise up in mutiny. The captain was strangling one of the officers when another officer pulled a gun on him. He is the captain who ran the ship aground on a coral reef. [Words indistinct]. The shipowners will have to pay a fine, and after the fine is paid, they must comply with all legal requirements so that the boat and crew are returned to them.

UNO, FSLN Clash During Masatepe Rally

PA1112150989 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1345 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Managua, 11 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—Several sources have reported to ACAN-EFE that opposition followers and Sandinists clashed in the streets on 10 December, in a southeastern Nicaraguan city, leaving property damage and an undetermined number of injured.

The clashes took place just before midday in Masatepe, 60 km southeast of Managua, during the National Opposition Union (UNO) electoral campaign. UNO consists of 14 parties.

Social Democratic Party President Guillermo Potoy reported that the incidents began just when Violeta Chamorro ended her speech. She is the UNO presidential candidate for the upcoming 25 February elections.

"When the meeting was about to end, people wearing UNO and Sandinist National Liberation Front [FSLN] T-shirts, and brandishing opposition and goverment party flags, got out of two vehicles within moments of each other and infiltrated the demonstration," Potoy said.

"Afterward, those who had arrived in the vehicles began attacking opposition members with things they had been carrying hidden under their clothing. This time the opposition did react," Potoy added.

Potoy said that after an undetermined number of opposition members were injured, the UNO demonstrators chased their attackers, and when leaders of the political alliance could no longer control the situation "a FAO (UN Food and Agriculture Organization) station wagon was burned."

Acting President Sergio Ramirez, at a speech he delivered in Potosi, 120 km to the south of Managua, said that the opposition followers assaulted and sacked a FSLN office and the house of a Sandinist hero's mother in Masatepe.

The Sandinist leader said that he would inform President Daniel Ortega, who is attending the Central American presidential summit in Costa Rica, of the Masatepe incidents.

The government radio station Voice of Nicaragua, reported there were other vehicles destroyed, houses damaged, 12 people wounded, and that the incidents were witnessed by UN representatives observing the electoral process.

Acting President Criticizes Incident

PA1112202489 Managua Sistema Sandinista Television Network Spanish 0200 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Acting President Sergio Ramirez Mercado said that those guilty of the Masatepe incidents will be

punished under the law and spoke against such events that attempt to interrupt the Nicaraguan election process.

[Begin Ramirez recording, in progress] ...we must be civilized in these elections, we must be civil, we must be mature. We gain nothing by writing on walls or insulting someone. This is not Sandinist behavior. I tell you today that I am very concerned, I am very worried because of these men and because of this woman [opposition presidential candidate Violeta Chamorro]. This woman was in Masatepe today, the UNO [United Opposition Union] woman candidate. I wonder where they want to lead these elections. That is my question. I have not been able to contact Daniel [Ortega], who is in Costa Rica, but I am speaking to you with the authority vested upon me as acting president of the republic at this moment. I am not speaking to you as a candidate. I ask these gentlemen, so they may hear me over the radio or whatever, where do they want to lead these elections?

We should all meditate on this. Do we want elections in which the Sandinists' houses are attacked? No! Elections in which the Sandinists' houses are sacked? No way! Elections in which houses of the mothers of heroes and martyrs—whom we Sandinists dearly love—are attacked and destroyed? No way! [applause]

When this stoning and attack was taking place, the Interior Ministry's representative in the 4th region requested instructions from us. We told him to put policemen on the streets only if requested by the OAS [Organization of American States] and UN observers. The observers requested the presence of policemen to stop the rioting, and when the policemen arrived, they were stoned. Those reactionary mobs, those mobs of the past, those Somozist mobs —and that is what they are—attacked the police.

As I said, we are very concerned about this situation. I have not been able to contact Daniel yet; I will call him in Costa Rica once I leave here to inform him of everything that has happened. However, we must say this clearly: There are guarantees here. We respect the electoral laws. International observers are here to see everything. [end recording]

Government Blames UNO

PA1112231889 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2207 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 11 Dec (ACAN - EFE)—The Nicaraguan Government today accused the opposition of promoting "the criminal and vandalistic actions" that led to the death of one person and the wounding of 11 others in Masatepe, 60 km southeast of Managua.

In a communique from the Nicaraguan Presidency, that was read today in San Jose, where the Central American presidential summit is being held, the Sandinist government accused the opposition of having "encouraged and provoked the incidents which, in addition to the death and the injuries, led to the burning of the Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN) headquarters in Masatepe. [quotation marks as received]

Nicaraguan Information Minister Manuel Espinoza, who read the communique, said the Nicaraguan police today arrested 13 people suspected of being responsible for the incidents.

According to the Sandinist official, OAS and UN observers "have testified" to the responsibility of the opposition members in unleashing the incidents.

"The violence was provoked by them (the opposition) because they want to tarnish the summit and the free electoral process in Nicaragua," the official said.

The communique from the Nicaraguan Presidency added that Ali Mamud Mora and Jeremias Mamud, the representatives of the National Opposition Union (UNO) in Masaya and Masatepe, resigned from their posts in repudiation of the "criminal and vandalistic" attitude of members of that political alliance.

Citizens Give Details

PA1112195189 Managua Sistema Sandinista Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Report by Vilma Estrada from Masatepe—passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] The tranquillity of this small town, 50 km southeast of the capital, was disturbed this morning as the result of an attack by UNO [National Opposition Union] bands during a demonstration held in Masatepe.

This is how the home of Francisco Blanco, a MIDINRA [Ministry of Agricultural Development and Agricultural Reform] worker was left, following the looting and destruction carried out by armed UNO groups, who also set on fire this vehicle owned by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO.

[Unidentified woman] "I am scared, very scared. I listened to one of the UNO's local Masatepe leaders—I believe his name is Mamuth—instructing people over a megaphone to steal everything, to loot and steal whatever they could get.

[Estrada] "Who do you believe attacked your home?

[Unidentified woman] "I do not know. I was watching television with my children when I heard the noise. I could hear them banging on the house, and they opened a hole in the roof. I took the two children and hid under that laundry basin. We hid there for about 25 minutes while they were here. They completely destroyed everything."

The Sandinist National Liberation Front municipal office was also destroyed in the attack, a motorcycle and bicycle were set on fire, office supplies were stolen, and the local CDI [Child Development Center] was damaged too.

[Unidentified man] "They had weapons, too. They had packages with small stones, and they also had doubled-edged knives."

[Second unidentified man] "The UNO people used these killers—we consider them killers because they carried wicks and fuel in gallon containers, overturned this vehicle, gutted by fire, as you can see. They intended to burn down the house next to the municipal office, using these same wicks, even though there were two defenseless children inside."

As a result of this vandalism more than a dozen people were injured, including several children.

[Second unidentified woman] "I received this blow to my forehead from a stone they threw at me."

[Third unidentified man] "They were all guardsmen [reference to former Somozist National Guard]. We were at the park when the demonstration went by, followed by others who had started out from La Concha. Afterward they began shouting: Long live UNO! Long live the guard! Then they began throwing stones at us. Commander Ortega must forget everything and give us weapons."

These events were witnessed by OAS observers. Federico Lopez, the local government representative, said the report of this incident will be turned over to the judicial authorities and to the Supreme Electoral Council.

UNO's Godoy Comments

PA1112224689 Managua Radio Catolica in Spanish 1130 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Statement by Virgilio Godoy Reyes, National Opposition Union, UNO, vice presidential candidate, in Masatepe on 10 December—recorded]

[Text] The demonstration began, as all UNO activities do, in a totally peaceful way. I would even say that the mood was festive. However, approximately 15 minutes after the march began, stones and sticks, thrown from buildings on the streets as the marchers passed, began hailing down on the demonstrators. Fortunately, this incident was soon over, and it seemed that everything returned to normal. The march ended approximately at noon, and there were the usual speeches.

However, at the time the meeting was closing with the singing of the national anthem, mobs that had been threatening to attack moments before arrived, but this time they were more violent. Armed with sticks and machetes, they began throwing stones at the crowd. For a moment we thought the problem was over, because the mobs withdrew momentarily when they saw the size of the enormous crowd that was gathered at the place. They realized the crowd was not willing to be broken up by means of stones, sticks, and machetes.

However, we asked the people to disperse through various streets. People began to peacefully disperse. The demonstration included people from Masatepe and nearby towns.

A few minutes later, wild mobs, who were sent to expressly attack the people, began threatening the crowd with their machetes, stones, and sticks again. Several people were injured. We have been told that one person was killed as a result of the attack, but we have not yet confirmed that information. In addition, we were told that the mobs themselves set the Sandinist Front campaign headquarters in Masatepe and one vehicle on fire.

We definitively condemn these acts of violence, as the many others that have taken place in the last 2 months. They are the result of a violent, aggressive policy that has its roots within the ruling party.

We have been informed that three trucks brought people from other towns into Masatepe last night and lodged them at a place called La Cruz or a name similar to this. We believe those people were the ones who carried out the attack on the UNO followers in Masatepe today.

The situation worsened because, instead of trying to control the mobs, the police tried to attack the civilian and defenseless population. Policemen shot into the air [words indistinct], but apparently one person was wounded by a firearm. We do not know whether the person was wounded by policemen or State Security members—who were also in Masatepe—or by other people who are authorized to carry weapons in these cases and are in fact members of the Sandinist Front ranks.

2 UNO Candidates Resign

PA1112214289 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 2012 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Two candidates of the UNO [National Opposition Union], said to have instigated the events in Masatepe, have resigned before the Supreme Electoral Council. (Jeremias and Ali Mahmud) said they resigned because they did not agree with the UNO leaders' actions, that resulted in the death of one person and much property damage.

Supreme Electoral Council President Mariano Fiallos Oyoguren has also condemned the UNO's actions in Masatepe and has ordered a full investigation of the 10 December events.

4 UNO Members Arrested for Actions

PA1212003989 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2307 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Managua, 11 Dec (ACAN - EFE)—The Nicaraguan Interior Ministry reported today that four members of the opposition have been arrested, accused of perpetrating the 10 December violent events in Masatepe, 60 km southeast of Managua.

In a communique, the Interior Ministry reported that as a result of the incidents, Manuel Guevara Calero, a youth, died, several buildings were looted and partially destroyed, and several vehicles were set on fire.

The Interior Ministry identified the arrested members of the opposition as Santos Martin Hernandez Sanchez, Concepcion de Maria Cerda Lopez, Jesus Victor Pavon Hernandez, and Irvin Lopez Estaquio.

The disturbances broke out after Violeta Chamorro, presidential candidate of the 14-party National Opposition Union [UNO], delivered a speech after a march through the streets of Masatepe.

According to the source, the UNO members were caught "red-handed with various household articles looted from the houses and the people who were attacked."

Meanwhile, the source added that the police of the 4th Region, to which Masatepe belongs, are undertaking an investigation "to identify other perpetrators and instigators of the acts of aggression against individuals and private and public property."

In addition, the Interior Ministry reiterated that the carrying of firearms, knives, or sharp objects which might be used as a means of aggression is prohibited in political demonstrations." [quotation marks as received].

UNO vice presidential candidate Virgilio Godoy today charged that "Sandinist mobs" on 10 December carried out three [as received] attacks on the opposition members, first with rocks and sticks and later with machetes and knives.

Godoy said that with systematic attacks on the demonstrations begun by the opposition on 29 October, the Sandinist Government "has decided to escalate the violence to try to prevent the normal development of the electoral process."

U.S. Unable To Show Video

PA1112225689 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2117 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] San Jose, 11 Dec (ACAN - EFE)—Eleven U.S. politicians from the Republican and the Democratic Parties were not allowed into the precinct of the sixth Central American summit. The U.S. politicians intended to criticize the attack on the Nicaraguan opposition's demonstration held on 10 December.

According to the U.S. politicians, who had just arrived in San Jose from Nicaragua, a mob of young Sandinists attacked a National Opposition Union (UNO) demonstration in Masatepe on 10 December. UNO is composed of 14 different political parties.

The Costa Rican authorities did not let U.S. Embassy officials, who were accompanying the delegation of politicians, show a videotape of the incidents in Masatepe, 60 km southeast of Managua.

According to official sources, the Masatepe incidents resulted in 12 people being injured and property damage.

Peter Kelly, a Democrat and chief of the U.S. delegation, who is also the president of the Center for Democracy, held the Sandinists responsible for the violent ending of the UNO rally.

Kelly said: "There is no doubt that the incident was instigated by the Sandinists."

Bob Beckel, a Democrat who participated in the news conference held outside the summit precinct, asserted that "the Nicaraguan opposition followers were attacked with machetes." Beckel said that he witnessed a young Sandinist, "wearing a Sandinist T-shirt," hit one opposition member with a machete.

Kelley said that "if the situation does not change in Nicaragua and the threats do not stop, there will not be fair and impartial elections there."

Renato Rojas, Costa Rican Presidency press chief, said that the order not to allow the U.S. politicians into the summit's precinct was given by "summit authorities to avoid mixing different issues and to avoid setting precedents."

The sixth Central American summit began in Costa Rica on 10 December. The summit's objectives are to halt increasing violence in the area, especially in El Salvador; to discuss the demobilization of the contra movement; and to examine the suspension of diplomatic relations between El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Nicaraguan Information Minister Manuel Espinoza has denied the U.S. politicians' accusations and asserted that according to OAS observers, who were also present at the site of the incidents, "the attacks were started by the UNO followers." Espinoza held Granada Mayor Alvaro Chamorro of the Conservative Party of Nicaragua responsible for the attack.

The U.S. politicians, who have been unable to show their videotape on the incidents, said that on the contrary, "an OAS observer confirmed that the Sandinists began stoning the UNO demonstrators."

UNO Candidate on Clash in Cofradias 3 Dec

PA1212080289 Managua Radio Catolica in Spanish 1130 GMT 4 Dec 89

[Interview with Carlos Manfut, National Opposition Union candidate on 4 December; place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Listeners of El Despertar newscast of Radio Catolica of Nicaragua, today we contacted Carlos Manfut, National Opposition Union, UNO, candidate to an assembly post. Mr Manfut, could you please tell us what happened in Cofradias, Managua Department this past weekened? Go ahead Mr Manfut.

[Manfut] Of course. On the morning of 3 December a group of copartisans and myself, all members of the Democratic Party of National Confidence, which is a UNO member, went to Cofradias to inaugurate the UNO campaign headquarters located three blocks south of the Cofradias Church. The house of the campaign quarters there belongs to Mrs Juanita Villalta.

We arrived at Cofradias at approximately 0930. We met with a group of over 200 copartisans. We were waiting for the arrival of other groups from neighboring towns to begin the peaceful ceremony that was going to be [words indistinct].

Shortly before 1000, more than 100 members of Sandinist Front mobs carrying signs, and Sandinist banners began to stone us in a brutal manner.

We tried to calm them down. We appealed to the Supreme Electoral Council, [CSE] to the electoral law, and to our right to hold that type of ceremony, but they said they represented the people's power and would only obey the nine commanders.

At that time, our young people responded to the attack in which our campaign house was destroyed, and many people were injured. We succeeded in chasing them away, but they returned carrying AK rifles. At least three of them were carrying AK rifles, and five or six others were carrying revolvers. They began to shoot at the campaign headquarters and right above our heads. The truth is that some people were wounded.

We locked ourselves inside the campaign headquarters, and we spent several terrifying hours inside that house because the mobs almost or practically destroyed the roof. The mobs demanded that we get out of the house. We did not want to do so because we risked being killed. It was brute, armed force against reason and logic.

They told us we had 20 minutes to get out of the house; otherwise they were going to use fragmentation grenades and Molotov cocktails. They said they were going to set the house on fire and burn us. They repeated that we only had 20 minutes to leave.

They told us our lives would be spared if we left Cofradias. We had to leave. As as told you before, we were unarmed. They, however, did not honor their word. After we had walked a few blocks, they began to stone us, injuring more people. They hit people with their AK rifles. I managed to get in a station wagon that was going at full speed. No authorities showed up.

We asked the people where the authorities were, and they told us that they were already present. They pointed to some men dressed in civilian clothing holding their AK rifles and identified them as the town authorities. The one leading the mob was the Nindiri local judge whose last name is Membreno. I do not know whether his first name is Jaime or Mario. He led the mobs.

There was also a young woman who is the daughter of one of the locals of the Sandinist Front. She was encouraging the mobs, even urging them to kill us.

We saw at least 15 or 16 of our people injured. Some of them had [word indistinct]. Mrs Juanita Villalta's brother was injured with [word indistinct].

We have, I cannot give you the name of the person who took the pictures until we deliver the material, many pictures and videotapes proving what we are saying. We managed to evacuate some people with the few station wagons that were available to us. We managed to get them out of there because that was a true slaughter.

Where were the Nicaraguan citizens' rights then? Where was the political opening the Sandinist Front is providing? What is happening is truly regrettable. We can say that in Cofradias, we lived a bloody Sunday [3 December].

[Reporter] Thank you for your statements Mr Carlos Manfut, UNO candidate for a National Assembly post.

Panama

Official To Issue 'Summons' to U.S. Generals

PA1112152489 Panama City MATUTINO in Spanish 11 Dec 89 p 1

[Text] This morning Ancon Corregidor Alex Jaen will issue an order for Marc Cisneros and Maxwell Thurman to be taken to his office to comply with proceedings regarding the complaint filed against these U.S. military men by Jorge Isaac Chandeck, honorable corregimiento representative for Ancon.

Corregidor Jaen said that Cisneros and Thurman must respond before him to the charges filed by Chandeck against them, which include threats to Panamanian residents in reverted areas; destruction of roads, streets, and avenues; disruption of public order; and obstruction of free transit, among others.

Thurman and Cisneros are responsible in Panama for the U.S. Southern Command troops. These troops are engaged here in Panama in activities which have nothing to do with the defense of the Panama Canal, and they have become forces for occupation, aggression, and subjugation.

The judicial summons [boleta de conduccion] against Thurman and Cisneros will be delivered to the Southern Command through Provost Major Ruben Rodriguez, as stipulated in the Torrijos-Carter treaties.

U.S Generals Declared 'Fugitives From Justice'

PA1112184489 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1715 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Panama City, 11 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—Panamanian authorities today ordered the arrest of U.S. Generals Maxwell Thurman and Marc Cisneros, chiefs

of the Pentagon's Southern Command and U.S. Army South based in Panama, after declaring them "fugitives from justice" in Panama.

Authorities from Ancon Corregimiento in Panama city told ACAN-EFE that Thurman and Cisneros had failed to appear in court to respond to a formal complaint lodged against them by a popular leader because of their military activities.

On 1 December, Ancon Representative Jorge Chandeck filed a complaint against the generals for blocking streets on "innumerable occasions," disturbing the citizens' peace with the "noisy mobilization of troops" in armored vehicles, helicopters, and airplanes, and of "threatening" the Panamanian people with "heavy and light firearms."

Chandeck also filed charges against Thurman and Cisneros for damage to public property, acts of provocation, and for failing to acknowledge Panamanian authorities and the police.

The complaint refers to the frequent military maneuvers that are carried out in Panamanian territory, including parts of the capital city, by the 12,000 Southern Command troops based on the isthmus.

Alex Jaen, corregidor of Ancon, where the Pentagon's Command and Army South have their general headquarters, told ACAN-EFE that both generals are "guilty of the crime of contempt of court" because they have failed to appear before authorities to respond to the charges, despite having been summoned on three occasions.

Jaen added that, had they presented themselves, the generals would have faced jail sentences and fines—the amounts of which he did not specify—because of the maneuvers troops under their command have carried out over the past few months in Panama City.

List of U.S. Officials To Be Published

PA1112151889 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 11 Dec 89 p 44

[From "The Griper" column]

[Text] It has been learned that the Foreign Ministry will publish the names of all U.S. Embassy officials who are here without Panamanian consent. Although U.S. visas are not issued here, there are more than 10 consuls and many other officials.

Noriega May Be Appointed Head of Government

PA1112194589 Paris AFP in Spanish 1930 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Panama City, 11 Dec (AFP)—Official sources said today that General Manuel Antonio Noriega may be appointed head of government this week. This appointment would give him absolute control of power in Panama.

Noriega, who is 52 years of age, was proposed last month for the office of head of government by several members of the National Assembly of Corregimiento Representatives (ANRC) made up of 510 members. Gen Noriega is its coordinator.

'Dignity Dinner' Postponed; Vigil, March Planned

PA1212000289 Panama City Telemetro Television in Spanish 2307 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] The Dignity Dinner that was to be held tomorrow, 12 December, [in honor of General Manuel Antonio Noriega] at the Atlapa Convention Center has been suspended until further notice, Benjamin Colamarco has announced. Colamarco, commander of the Dignity Battalions, emphasized that the Dignity Battalions are on a special state of alert.

[Begin Colamarco recording] We are making a national call this afternoon in all provinces and districts for the Dignity Battalions and the CODEPADI [Committees for the Defense of the Fatherland and Dignity]—except for those that have to be on reserve, and we will not disclose their names—to carry out a great vigil from 1800 to 2100 throughout the length and breadth of the country. This vigil with burning torches will begin at 1800 in two places in Panama City: in front of the entrance to Quarry Heights [site of the U.S. Southern Command] in the reverted area bordering on Martyrs Avenue, and in the area of the France Plaza where the Palace of Justice is located.

We are calling on all patriotic and nationalist forces to meet at 0800 in the Ascanio Arosemena Plaza, bordering on Martyrs Avenue. All Dignity Battalions and CODEPADI of the metropolitian area will meet at that point to begin a patriotic march to express the repudiation of our people of the [Filos-Hines] treaty that tried to establish the bases of a U.S. military colony on our territory. Our people have continuously repudiated that treaty, which was also rejected by a previous generation on 12 December 1947.

We also want to point out that we Panamanians are not willing to accept any instrument that will harm the sovereignty of our people and country, and therefore we will march from the Ascanio Arosemena Plaza, down through Central Avenue, and to the France Plaza. [end recording]

U.S. Aggression Blamed

PA1212002589 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2227 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Panama City, 11 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—The dinner organized in honor of Panamanian "strongman" General Manuel Antonio Noriega, slated for 12 December, was cancelled today. Instead, the group called for a march of militia members on 12 December. Benjamin Colamarco, chief of the "Dignity Battalions" militias, announced today that the dinner had been cancelled and he blamed the "U.S. economic aggression" and the lack of space for holding the dinner.

In its place, Colamarco announced a march through the Panama City business sector that will culminate with a rally in front of the Supreme Court of Justice in which

Gen Noriega will be declared "commander and leader of the national liberation process" of Panama.

Following an announcement in late November of an alleged U.S. plan to kidnap Noriega, the Panamanian military chief did not attend a mass rally in his honor organized by the women of San Miguelito District, on the outskirts of the city.

Colamarco also warned the U.S. Army intelligence brigade that "we are following your steps," but he refused to explain why this is being done. He also announced that as of today, the "Dignity Battalions" will be on a "special state of alert."

According to Colamarco, the march is intended to reaffirm the rejection of the Filos-Hines Treaty on the Panama defense sites, a document rejected by Panamanian parliament in 1947.

Nils Castro on Panamanian-Cuban Solidarity

PA1212044489 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 9 Dec 89

[Interview with Presidential Adviser Dr Nils Castro by Juan Jose Veiga Pena; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Veiga] Dr Castro, our people are currently honoring the Cuban internationalists who died in Angola and other parts of the world. What significance does internationalism have for you?

[Castro] The Cuban people's solidarity is not expressed in words, nor is it strictly based on ideology. The Cuban people have supported this solidarity with their lives, the lives of the revolutionaries. This is an appropriate time, particularly on a day like today when Cuba is paying tribute to the revolutionaries who have fallen around the world while offering that unselfish and principled solidarity, to talk about this solidarity, which has been one of the most important pillars of the Cuban revolution in Latin America and the world. This solidarity has been one of Cuba's most important characteristics during the past few years.

This solidarity has also been expressed in outstanding and exemplary moral and political conduct. This solidarity has not only proven to be faithful to principle, but also mature and flexible enough to make history.

When we look at the contribution made by revolutionary Cuba in the liberation process of Latin America people, especially in Central America, we can see how important it has been. Cuba has helped Central Americans, not only by offering Nicaragua its experience and moral policies, but also by its constructive and flexible attitude in helping to find peaceful yet liberating and fitting solutions to the Central American conflicts. It is undeniable that Cuba has contributed positively to the process of finding politically negotiated yet also liberating solutions to the Central American conflicts. Today, these conflicts have increased due to U.S. imperialism's stubborn interventionist policies.

The occasion is appropriate for thanking Cuba for its permament solidarity with the Panamanian people, who are presently blockaded militarily, harrassed, and threatened by U.S. imperialism in its efforts to perpetuate the presence of U.S. military bases in Panama. The U.S. has denigrated Panamanian officials. It has specifically, but fruitlessly, tried to discredit General Manuel Antonio Noriega and tarnish his image as the leader of the Panamanian national liberation process.

The United States has violated the Panama Canal treaties in many ways recently. It continues to receive the benefits provided by the canal which should be received by the Panamanian people. It continues to evade international laws and does not comply with the treaties' clauses and objectives. Presently, violations to the treaties and international law have reached their highest point. President Bush has unilaterally designated a new administrator for the Panama Canal. He has not complied with clauses in the treaty which stipulate that the Panamanian designated as Panama Canal administrator, a post that is to be assigned on 1 January 1990, must be proposed by the Panamanian Government. President Bush has not accepted the person proposed by the Panamian Legislative Assembly and has designated someone else. He has justified this action by stating that the person he designated is also a Panamanian citizen, but the fact is that he has not accepted the person proposed by the national government. This is only one example of the hundreds of violations to the treaties. However, it is especially significant as it clearly demonstrates that he has deceived all the Latin American governments which acted as guarantors at the signing of the Torrijos-Carter Treaties.

Naturally, Panama will not stop in its efforts to recover Panama's sovereignty and territorial and moral integrity. Thus, our people's liberating struggle will continue and will assume the forms needed to guarantee full compliance with this international agreement and international laws regarding the Panamanian people's right to sovereignty and self-determination.

[Veiga] We thank Dr Nils Castro, a well-known Panamanian intellectual, political, and revolutionary figure, for his words to Radio Havana Cuba.

Government TV Station on Need for Dialogue

PA1112124589 Panama City Telecinco Television in Spanish 0030 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Station editorial: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, to God the things that are God's, and to the Panamanian people the things that are the Panamanian people's"]

[Text] Telecinco responsibly heeds the call for dialogue and reconciliation by the Panamanian Bishops Conference [CEP], the highest entity of the Catholic faith which

the majority of Panamanians profess. The CEP's call gains greater importance because it comes from the faith professed by those on opposing sides. The call also coincides with the appeal by other religious groups to reach a plan to ensure the common welfare. We agree that the economic measures taken against Panama by the United States cause the poor people to grow poorer and cause desolation and excessive despair to prevail in their hearts.

The Panamanian bishops are right to state that while the United States attempts to restore democracy, its inhuman economic sanctions are causing damage to the foundations of Panama's economy, damage that will last for many years, and are gradually suffocating the people, who are sinking lower each day. The CEP denounces the foreign aggression expressed in military actions in our own country. It also warns that violence is looming like a specter over the entire country due to the resentment, hatred, aggression, and mistrust that are accumulating. It concludes that we cannot continue to become polarized, that this fatherland—which belongs to all—is imploring and also demanding the emergence of men and women willing to hold talks, forgive, and seek reconciliation.

Telecinco concurs with the distinguished Catholic bishops that this fatherland of ours is entitled to demand that each and every one of its children must set aside his selfishness and interests as a person or group to undertake the primary task of the common good. Since its foundation, the channel with a Panamanian heart and soul has imposed on itself the duty to appeal for calm and decreased violence. It has proposed actions to reach a national understanding that is welcomed with satisfaction and enthusiasm by all the political groups, the news media of all sides, and prestigious and numerous organizations.

However, the forced manipulations by a foreign power, together with an extreme domestic polarization, led to the cancellation of the elections for reasons everyone knows. Almost immediately the nations of the hemisphere urged the government and the rival sides—the former candidates of the presidential tickets—to reach a political understanding, but that did not make progress either, despite the huge scenario set up for this purpose and despite the impartiality of the distinguished members of the OAS commission.

Broad coverage allowed the people to learn all the details of the actions by the persons involved in a rivalry that should have been temporary. Also on that occasion, Telecinco urged the government and the former candidates of the rival presidential slates to reach the understanding the fatherland and the international community demanded, but unfortunately neither wisdom nor commitment prevailed. It seems now that the task is up to the presidents of the political parties, to new forums, or perhaps to the open forums, the mass or professional organizations, or simply, as the CEP noted, to men and women willing to hold a dialogue and seek reconcilation.

Today we mark the 950th [as heard] day of an intransigent partisan rivalry that continues to cause an unnecessary drain on the country and which has already claimed victims. Luckily, domestic tensions have diminished, drawing away from us the possibility of becoming a Lebanon or El Salvador. Panamanians are now close to the longed-for reconciliation.

Telecinco offers free access to its installations and its nationwide network to those groups of men and women capable of holding a dialogue and seeking reconciliation, and also to the CEP, to contribute to this patriotic and necessary objective. The occasion is propitious because in December mankind's sentiments of loftier values, such as motherhood, generosity, and peace to men of good will, come to the fore. This is not the time to put a blindfold over our eyes or a piece of ice in our brains or hearts.

Let us open the paths for understanding to resolve this temporary rivalry, with the help of God, who has never left Panama. Let us find together fresh, daring, and innovative ideas to propose peaceful and respectful plans that are exclusively by Panamanians for Panamanians and with Panamanians. Let us render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, to God the things that are God's, and to the Panamanian people the things that are the Panamanian people's.

Bishop's Letter to Rodriguez Published

PA1112194089 Panama City PANORAMA CATOLICO in Spanish 19 Nov 89 pp 7, 2

[Letter from Darien Bishop Romulo Emiliani to Provisional President Francisco Rodriguez dated 1 November in Meteti, Darien Province]

[Text] Mr President: This country smells like blood! Yes, blood spilled in a spiral of violence that generates more violence. I am afraid even bleaker times are in store for the country because an outbreak of resentment, hatred, aggression, and a climate of mistrust, all of which trigger often uncontrolled defense mechanisms, is unavoidable.

I am writing this letter, Mr President, because I think you have part of the solution within your grasp. The essence of your mandate is the provisional civilian power you hold, which paves the way for something new—full democracy. This is the reason for your title and why you were chosen. Your mission is to prepare the way and complete the transition process. Neither you nor the government you head can remain in power permanently, according to the agreement that was reached under difficult and complex circumstances and as an emergency measure. Yours was to be a provisional government that would lead the country toward democracy. In fact, I believe your presence reduced the existing tensions. The people, however, await your resolute action to lead the country toward lasting peace and reconciliation. I regard elections and a government elected by the people as the only solution to the country's problems. This would alleviate all this agonizing tension.

What is happening in the country? On the one hand, radicalism and pronouncements are meeting more opposition every day. We are facing a blind alley from which two Republics, represented by the government and the opposition, are arising. The people are suffering from rising unemployment and property crimes while increased anguish worsens mental health problems and creates the right atmosphere for collective hysteria (hunger and unemployment lead to this). Hysteria can unleash more violence, or the opposite—a collective depression that can lead the people to disillusionment and a total lack of motivation.

From a philosophic and historic point of view and following a dialectical Hegelian pattern, there is a certain state of affairs (thesis), and in reaction an opposing situation arises (antithesis), which in turn leads to a third phase in which valid and progressive elements join the first two together (synthesis). From this we see the need to admit that the Torrijist process is wearing out. It has lost power, and a human wave is coming with many young professionals, workers, and politicians who do not fit into the first group for different reasons and are looking for their place in the country. Not to see this is to be blind to reality. New energy and ways of looking at problems appear, and it is very important for the country to take advantage of all this human richness. Of course, everything moves ahead thanks to contradictions that are always resolved by synthesis. A new, intelligent generation must absorb all the achievements of a political and social movement that had its succcesses and failures. If we see events as dialectical processes, we may expect reconciliations. The mistake has been to think, "or" when we should have thought "and." It is not: "It is either this or that," but rather, "whatever is good from this and whatever is good from that." No one can deny the past, and the key is to absorb it.

However, there has been fanaticism on both sides. We have been denying all the other group's good points. I also do not believe in absolutes: "Torrijism, military men, government equals total corruption, evil, crime." That is not true. "Opposition: All are turncoats, sold out to imperialism, subservient to the oligarachy." This is not true either. This causes fanaticism and sows the seeds of civil war. I believe there is good everywhere. Reconciliation would come about through elections by taking into account the fatherland's reconstruction and the "and." Whoever wins should assimilate the good things of the other side and include it in the overall growth process.

Mr President: Could the Torrijist movement carry out this dialectical process and generate a strong national movement to trigger change? It could be but I sincerely doubt it. The Torrijist process is very worn out. This process accomplished a historical task, but why should it hold on to power? The Torrijist process could regenerate, strengthen, and grow anew as an opposition force if it lost the elections. It is also very healthy to be in the opposition. Working from the political bases—without government support, which produces lethargy and accomodations—makes leaders mature and embues them with brilliance and command over the masses. Historically great leaders have arisen after they experienced the discomforts of life in opposition, secrecy, and even persecution. The experience has made leaders grow closer to their people.

I believe in national reconciliation and, as Heraclitus said: "Opposition is beneficial; from things that differ comes the fairest attunement." The time has come to stop the insults that political enemies hurl at each other. It weakens our vision of reality. One side says "corrupted" and the other says "turncoats." Are those the only traits each side has? I do not believe so. I believe in the kindness of humanity, in the good faith of many people, and in dialogue. I prefer to hold on to my beliefs than to have the sick attitude of seeing evil and only evil everywhere. There are advantages to be seen everywhere. However, I also believe we are always moving and that all organized bodies follow a continual development process. The old must allow the new to take its place, thus forming a new synthesis that is to become the thesis of another process. All this is good for the country. It should respect these historical cycles and absorb the wealth of different political groups.

I believe in democracy because it allows access to power by the various traditional political movements and this enriches the country's climb toward full development through variety. I know that with the present situation there is great fear and concern that a different type of government could come to power through elections and lead the country to a total surrender to imperialism. I do not believe this. I do not believe this could happen. I do know that the people reserve the right to overthrow any government that sells the fatherland. The people have to remain alert and make their leaders keep their promises. There is also fear of revenge, vengeance, in case one or the other side wins. The Church must remain alert so this does not occur, and before holding elections a negotiation and pact would need to be agreed upon wherein the rights of whoever became the opposition would be fully respected.

Mr President, you have been elected to lead us toward the country's democratization. Taking into account the obvious differences of such a comparison, remember the election of the "Good Pope," the elderly Pope John XXIII, who they say was elected as a transition pope to await a younger and stronger man. He surprised the world with the Second Vatican Council, which has meant spiritual enrichment and great change for the Church. He was the key man, the fundamental element for change. You too can earn your place in history by keeping the goal for which you were appointed: "Lead us to democracy!"

Mr President, I again tell you this land smells like blood. It is not fair to spill one more drop of blood. I do not want for Panama what is happening in those dear but suffering countries such as El Salvador, Guatemala, and

Colombia, where the bloodbath never ends and where thousands of dead are a warning of the seriousness of sowing death, because violence breeds violence. There is still time to save our land, Panama, and the time is now right. This is the key historical moment to pull the country back from the abyss. I would grieve terribly if a regime opponent, a Defense Forces member, or a priest were to fall. And already some have fallen from all sectors. Not a single death more! Not a single death more! This should now be the slogan for all Panamanians. This land is beautiful, marvelous, and our people have great values. Let us not ruin everything because of fanaticism and intransigence.

I believe in Panama and in Panamanians. I know we can solve this. We can still talk, hold dialogues, reach a reconciliation. Every death that is violent is a sin against life. It is a sin against God, our Lord.

I envision for this country an era of progress at all levels. And we must be creative. Panama, an international shopping center with a scientifically structured tourist industry, hotels, beaches, and modern highways fitted for that purpose; hospital centers with state-of-the-art scientific equipment (we already have qualified medical personnel) would attract people from South America who currently travel to the United States; protected industry that would sell its products without the burden of high taxes; flourishing trade that would be one of the best in America; Panama emerging as an economic power in the style of the so-called "four Asian tigers" by exploiting its geographic position, the fact that the dollar is its currency, the banking center, and the hospitality of our people. All this requires creativity and daring. However, none of this can be accomplished without the participation and consensus of the people. We need free elections and a participatory democracy. Any decision made without consulting the grass roots inevitably leads to failure because it lacks the people's support. Furthermore, without full democracy we would continue to be isolated by many countries. This is counterproductive because of the interdependence among nations.

Mr President, I am aware that there is a U.S. aggression. I realize that part of the problem comes from the North; that they think about their interests and do not care about the fate of a hungry people. I am also aware of the constant humiliations stemming from military operations on Panamanian soil and the arrogant warlike display of all kinds of weapons. I would obviously never accept a U.S. invasion. I do not want a democracy "parboiled" with Panamanian blood and cooked by U.S. nationals. Of course not, but it is not fair to blame all the problems on the agression and not see the mistakes committed over so many years of administration by the [Torrijist] process. Many past mistakes are being dragged along with us, and the burden has now become too heavy.

I realize that this letter will prompt some people to say that I am meddling in politics. Those who know my background know that I am no politician; that is not my interest. I am totally committed to the pastoral ministry that I have been assigned to and to preach the Word in Darien Province and in the rest of the country. However, I am a Panamanian and have the right to speak out. I must express my concern, and I am addressing you because I recognize your authority.

We cannot live in anarchy. You are the provisional president, and therefore you are the top civilian authority. I respect you and that is why I am writing to you. I feel that you are a thoughtful man who is aware of the situation. I also address you in my capacity as the bishop of a poor, a very poor, area. I do not wish to see any more malnourished children, jobless people, peasants who lose their harvest for lack of adequate roads and transportation. Poor people are clamoring for justice! And we must stop fighting so much among ourselves and pay attention to those who suffer the most—as usual, the poor people.

Mr President, the solution is in your hands. God and the nation will judge us for what we have done for the poor, who are the majority in this country. Lead us to democracy. I hope that God will listen to us: Not one more death! Not one more death!

Yours faithfully,

Monsignor Romulo Emiliani

Bishop of Darien Province

Canal Official To Appear Before Assembly

PA1212000689 Panama City Telemetro Television in Spanish 2319 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] Fernando Manfredo, deputy administrator of the Panama Canal Commission [PCC], will be summoned to appear before the General Assembly of Corregimiento Representatives on Thursday, 14 December, to answer several questions and report on his work with the PCC. The 510 representatives will meet at 0900 in the Legislative Palace.

Panamanian Provisional President Francisco Rodriguez and Panama Defense Forces Commander Manuel Antonio Noriega, as well as members of the Supreme Court of Justice and other government officials, will also attend the meeting. The agenda also includes analyzing the creation of new corregimientos in San Miguelito.

Bolivia

Former Minister Arce Gomez Extradited to U.S.

PY1112180689 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1557 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] La Paz, 11 Dec (EFE)—Interior Minister Guillermo Capobianco reported today that the Bolivian Government has extradited Luis Arce Gomez to the United States. Luis Arce Gomez was interior minister during the dictatorship of Luis Garcia Meza, and he has been sought by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration since 1980.

Arce Gomez, who was termed by the U.S. Government the "cocaine minister," was arrested on 10 December as a result of an operation carried out by a team including personnel from the Mobile Units for Rural Area (UMOPAR)—which is in charge of the antidrug struggle—and the police.

Arce Gomez was arrested at a ranch 4 km from Santa Cruz, southeast of La Paz.

Arce Gomez was declared "in contempt of court" in April 1986 because he did not appear in court to testify at the trial that was promoted by the Bolivian Government and social and political organizations. He was charged with sedition, assassination, persecution, torture, and economic crimes perpetrated during the Garcia Meza military dictatorship during 1980-1981.

Government To Pay Bilateral Debt in 25 Years

PY1112151089 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2353 GMT 10 Dec 89

[Text] La Paz, 10 Dec (EFE)—The ministers of the economic sector today reported that the Bolivian Government is planning to pay all of its bilateral debt, which amounts to $1.58 billion, within 25 years.

Planning and Coordination Minister Enrique Garcia and Finance Minister David Blanco have stated that La Paz authorities are preparing a negotiations plan to be submitted to creditor governments during a Paris Club meeting that will be held in Paris early in 1990.

They added that the IMF and the World Bank will endorse the Bolivian proposals.

Garcia and Blanco explained that this strategy is aimed at obtaining special treatment for special repayment terms and possible pardoning of principal and interest by creditors.

The Bolivian foreign debt, which amounted to $1.58 billion on 30 September, is owed to the FRG, Belgium, Denmark, the United States, France, the Netherlands, Israel, Japan, Switzerland, and Sweden, Garcia and Blanco added.

Paraguay

Foreign Minister Denies Report of Resignation

PY0912121489 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 9 Dec 89 p 4

[Text] Luis Maria Argana yesterday said that he has not tendered his resignation as foreign minister, a post he has held since 3 February 1989. When asked about an article stating that he had resigned during a meeting with President Andres Rodriguez in Government House on 4 December, Argana replied: "I have not resigned."

Argana had said after that audience with the president that he did not resign; however, in view of a report published yesterday to the effect that he had actually resigned, Argana clarified: "I did not resign."

Told that there are persistent rumors that he had resigned, Argana reiterated: "I have not resigned, and I have not tendered my resignation from my post. That report is not true," he stressed.

Cabinet Tenders Resignation to Rodriguez 11 Dec

PY1112141089 Asuncion Radio Primero de Marzo in Spanish 1300 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Text] The Rodriguez adiministration's entire Cabinet resigned today. The 12 members of the Cabinet today tendered their resignation to President Andres Rodriguez. The technical term for this is to place their posts at the disposal of the president, but what they actually did was resign. Now it is up to the president to either confirm them or replace them.

Ministers Interviewed

PY1112161289 Asuncion Radio Primero de Marzo in Spanish 1241 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Interview with Education Minister Dionisio Gonzalez Torres, Justice and Labor Minister Alexis Frutos Vaesken, and Interior Minister Orlando Machuca Vargas by unidentified reporters at Government House in Asuncion on 11 December —recorded with introductions by station reporter Tony Leon]

[Text] [Leon] The 12 members of the Cabinet today tendered their resignations to the president. They have placed their posts at the president's disposal. This does not mean they have resigned; however, some may define it as a resignation depending on how the semantics are interpreted.

Education Minister Dioniso Gonzalez Torres, Interior Minister Orlando Machuca Vargas, and Justice and Labor Minister Alexis Frutos Vaesken were entrusted with the mission of submitting the Cabinet's resignation to the president.

[Gonzalez] The three of us are here today because we were entrusted with a special mission. As we told the president today, just as he honored us by appointing us

members of his Cabinet during a political crisis, we have come here as representatives of the 12 members of the Cabinet, to place our posts at his disposal. We believe this is the proper thing to do in any crisis, although our country is not experiencing a dramatic situation. However, we are facing a political crisis. This is what is done in many other countries when governments face social or economic crisis.

As representatives of the Cabinet, the three of us told the president that we have placed our posts at his disposal.

[Reporter] (?How did he react?)

[Gonzalez] Well, this took him by surprise because he was not aware of this decision.

[Questions indistinct as several reporters speak simultaneously]

[Gonzalez] Just a minute, just a minute. This was simply a spontaneous gesture on the part of the Cabinet. We believe this is the way it should be. We believe that from a moral and political point of view, we members of the Cabinet should place our posts at the president's disposal so that he will be free to make the proper decision as the true patriot he is.

[Reporter] How did he react?

[Gonzalez] I thought he was taken by surprise. He was not expecting this. However, he thanked us for this gesture because it was spontaneous.

[Reporter] Did you decide this during a meeting?

[Gonzalez] Yes, sir. I really do not know how the media did not get this news. A few days ago all the members of the Cabinet held a meeting, and all of us decided to do this. This is normal in any democracy. When there is a crisis, this is the proper thing to do, although ours is not such a serious crisis. However, it is a crisis nevertheless.

[Reporter] Is this attitude to express solidarity with some Cabinet members who may be...

[Gonzalez, interrupting] No, no, no. This is not the case. No one said anything. There were no preconditions. This was a spontaneous gesture that was supported by all Cabinet members.

[Reporter] Were all the Cabinet members in agreement?

[Gonzalez] All of us were in agreement about placing our positions at the disposal of the president.

[Reporter] We resort to you because we want first-hand information. If you are offered the chairmanship of the Colorado Party executive board, will you accept?

[Gonzalez] Wait a minute. Please keep in mind that I am a (?physician).

[Reporter] Precisely.

[Gonzalez] Therefore, as I have repeatedly said, I am not a politician. I do not have the experience or the grooming to be a politican. In other words, it is not my field of action. This is a question I cannot answer because this depends on many factors. I do not believe anyone will get the idea to appoint me party president. I do not think this will happen, because I am not cut out to do this.

[Reporter] Thank you very much.

[Leon] We also talked with Justice and Labor Minister Alexis Frutos Vaesken.

[Frutos] We are simply trying to give the president some flexibility so that he can restructure his Cabinet and do whatever he believes is more convenient.

[Reporter] Did you have any ulterior reasons for doing this?

[Frutos] No. People should not interpret this as a refusal to cooperate with the president. We are as enthusiastic as ever.

[Reporter] But obviously...

[Frutos, interrupting] Excuse me, but I want to finish this thought. Moreover, we want to stress that with great pleasure, all of us will accept whatever the president decides. Yes, you were saying?

[Reporter] Is this a political decision?

[Frutos] Yes, of course. This is a political decision because we are leaving the president free to make any decision. I believe this is quite normal in a crisis.

[Reporter] About the salary issue, are press reports right about the government's commitment with the IMF not to increase salaries [words indistinct].

[Frutos] I do not know [words indistinct] because I am not aware of this. [passage indistinct]

[Reporter] Will the salary increase issue be again postponed because of the Cabinet resignation?

[Frutos] I do not think so...

[Reporter interrupts with indistinct question]

[Frutos] This resignation will not change anything because we will continue to work in our respective posts with the same enthusiasm as before.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct].

[Frutos] Until the president makes a decision.

[Reporter] Only the president can make a decision?

[Frutos] Only the president can make a decision. He has already informed us that he will not make any hasty decisions and that he will be cool-headed.

[Reporter] Then this resignation does not mean that the Cabinet is unhappy with the Rodriguez administration.

[Frutos] On the contrary. It means that we are happy with the Rodriguez administration. It reasserts our confidence in the Rodriguez government. Through this we are allowing the president to make those decisions he sees fit so that we may be able to implement this process which we all want to succeed.

[Machuca] As the education minister clearly explained, the president was taken by surprise. However, I believe this was the proper and intelligent decision to make in view of the situation.

[Reporter] Is this a political decision?

[Machuca] Yes, perhaps it is.

[Reporter] Will this lead to an eventual coalition government?

[Machuca] No, I personally doubt this very much.

[Reporter] General, there are rumors about [words indistinct], that in Concepcion Department the government delegates. Are you aware of [words indistinct]?

[Machuca] Yes, I am aware of it. It will be available on 14 December [words indistinct].

[Reporter] Will they also tender their resignations?

[Machuca] Please let me finish. The government delegates will be meeting with the president on 14 December. They will also express their support for the magnificent work this administration is carrying out.

[Reporter] As interior minister, what is your opinion about the guards...

[Leon, interrupting] This is the issue we are concerned about: The 12 members of the Cabinet have tendered their resignations.

President Rodriguez Comments

PY1112174089 Asuncion RPC Television Network in Spanish 1649 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Interview with President Andres Rodriguez by unidentified reporters on 11 December; place not given—recorded; broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Reporter] ...resignation, what will you decide in this regard?

[Rodriguez] I knew we would be discussing this issue. [laughs] At any rate, I would like to inform you that the Cabinet resigned today through three Cabinet members. The Cabinet placed their posts at my disposal.

I would also like to inform you that I was appointed presidential candidate by the great Colorado Party, of which I am a member. I am very proud to have been elected. I am the president of all Paraguayans, but I am a member of the Colorado Party.

Therefore, it is useless for people to be spreading rumors that we will establish a coalition government and things of this sort. I owe everything to the Colorado Party, and the members of my administration will be from the Colorado Party.

[Reporter] Mr President, will there be any Cabinet changes?

[Rodriguez] We will have to see. We will study the situation, and we will do what is the best for the country.

[Reporter] Since this sort of action is a novelty in our country and in national political affairs, what legal steps will be followed?

[Rodriguez] No. Do you believe this is the first time this sort of thing has occurred in the history of government affairs? I believe that in all countries of the world, under similar circumstances, Cabinet members tender their resignations to allow the president freedom of action to make the necessary cabinet changes.

Uruguay

Defense Minister on Elections, Promotions, Funds

PY0812172089 Montevideo EL DIA in Spanish 29 Nov 89 p 7

[Text] The Broad Front's triumph in the elections in Montevideo "does not affect Uruguayan military institution," Defense Minister Hugo Medina has said. He acknowledged that the capital "is very important because half of Uruguay's population is concentrated there. However, the Front's triumph is not as important since Montevideo is only a departmental government."

Regarding the 26 November elections the minister said: "It was a triumph for democracy because the most popular candidate won in completely clean and clear elections. This circumstance brings us great tranquility and satisfaction because it reflects the will of the people."

Regarding the possible arrival to power of a Broad Front government, Medina quoted Senator Francisco Rodriguez Camusso who had said: "We can count on the loyalty of the Armed Forces members because the military men of this country are free men who have the right to think and choose the model under which they want to live." Medina added: "Soldiers can tell whether they want to live under a Western system or under a communist regime. Their loyalty to any government is guaranteed; total loyalty is a commitment that exists between the soldier and the government."

"If the government knows how to obtain the support of the soldiers, it will obtain it; if the soldier is willing to be loyal, the government can count on him effectively," Medina said.

Regarding the appointment of the next defense minister, Medina affirmed that since it cannot be otherwise, he

will be "respected" whether he is a civilian or a military man "because that is one of the democratic conditions safeguarded by the Armed Forces."

Medina said that if political criteria were used 1 February 1990 to appoint the Army, Navy, and Air Force commanders—as well as seven other generals—then it would be "a terrible mistake." The new officials "must be appointed using criteria in keeping with the president's views on Armed Forces management and with the professional capacity of the men who must occupy the posts; that is, of the commanders, generals, colonels, and Navy captains," he said.

Medina said: "Ideally, the appointments should be made by consensus" between President Julio Maria Sanguinetti and President-elect Luis Alberto Lacalle "because that would demonstrate consideration for the former president who knows the candidates."

Medina also said that the Army will submit a list of almost 50 colonels for eventual promotion, while the two other forces will submit lists of all the officers eligible for promotion.

"Using political criteria to fill Armed Forces posts would be a terrible mistake," the minister said.

Medina said that he favors restructuring in the military sector "but first we must see what funds there are available. If the Armed Forces want to be restructured, they will need modern and appropriate materiel so that quality may compensate for quantity."

The minister said that troop strength has been reduced by 5,000 men since 1985, and the three forces combined currently total 27,000 men. Medina said that this number "is quite reasonable" but "the Armed Forces are getting smaller every day due to voluntary retirements. The training level of high- and lower-rank personnel is diminishing. The decision capacity and maturity of the troops is also being harmed because they are made up of extremely young people. A military officer is serving 15 years in active duty and then retiring. Sergeants are retiring young men."

Medina said that "changing the retirement age could be a solution, but the best thing would be to increase the salaries."

He said that 2,300 men have retired voluntarily in the past few years "and if this trend continues, the forces will be reduced to an alarming level. They retire for natural and spontaneous reasons, since they seek better wages. They move to the private sector were they get better pay. This also shows that the employment level in the country has improved."

Christian Democratic Party Magazine Closes Down

PY0812181489 Montevideo LA HORA POPULAR in Spanish 2 Dec 89 p 2

[Text] As of next week, another publication will stop circulating in our country.

Following a resolution by its publishing council, AQUI—a magazine that follows Christian Democratic Party guidelines—will hit the streets for the last time on 6 December.

The magazine opened in April 1983.

Venezuela

President Perez Holds News Conference

PA1112123589 Caracas Venezolana de Television Canal 8 in Spanish 0000 GMT 8 Dec

[News conference by President Carlos Andres Perez with local and foreign reporters moderated by Central Information Office Director Pastor Heydra at the Miraflores Presidential Palace in Caracas on 8 December—recorded]

[Text] [Heydra] The first question is from Pablo J. Hernandez, news chief of the daily EL CARABONEDO.

[Hernandez] Good evening, Mr President. I am pleased to begin this news conference because it allows me the opportunity to ask a question on the political topic of the day. You have not commented on the matter. I mean the results of the 3 December regional elections. The results for Democratic Action [AD] and the high voter absenteeism rate are two salient points. On 25 November, barely 1 week before the regional elections, you said at the opening of the governors' regional convention: The people of the states will reiterate their trust in the government they chose in the December 1988 elections; the government's cohesion and coherence will be maintained at the national and regional level.

So, in light of the results of last Sunday's elections, when opposition candidates won almost half of the 20 governorships, and considering the high voter absenteeism rate—which according to political analysts represents a protest vote or a demonstration of protest against the government—how do you feel about this situation? It would seem that, contrary to your remarks about the people reaffirming their trust, there was no such trust, since opposition governors won nine governorships and the voter absenteeism rate was high, as analysts noted.

[Perez] I deemed it advisable to hold this news conference because I understood that the country wanted to know some of my views on what happened on 3 December. I think my duty is to tell them my thoughts on the topic. First, I want to say we must not hold a negative view regarding 3 December developments. The voter absenteeism rate is undoubtedly very high. Although the final figures are not out yet, it ranges from

60 to 70 percent. We can interpret this thousands of ways. We just heard one interpretation in the reporter's question; he asked me about the government's responsibility. Of course, this is a childish explanation, because voting against the government would have entailed an avalanche of votes for the opposition. That is how to punish a government—to vote en masse for its adversaries.

Without saying that several coinciding factors played a role in the voter absenteeism, we could not say that the vote was against the government. However, we cannot eschew our overall responsibility for the situation. I think that our responsibility drives us to examine what really happened in the electoral process. A lesson lies hidden in it. An often repeated phrase says: The people are always right. I do not utter it in a demagogic sense or to derive some sort of consolation, because we—and here I am talking as an AD member—lost many posts. That is the truth; we have here a profound lesson for the country. That is why I think that Sunday's elections were very useful for national reflection and to reinforce democracy.

A new phase has begun in Venezuelan life. We must not forget that we are experiencing a situation of major world-wide changes. The world built following World War II has vanished, crumbled, with such stunning speed that it has surprised everyone. Latin America is not alien to that situation. All over Latin America we are experiencing a time of major transformation. The democratic progress of the region has been deeply shaken and moved by the magnitude of the changes and economic adjustments, which our society cannot properly assimilate. Elections in Venezuela were held within that framework. Later, owing to a number of circumstances that we will not go into in-depth, but must be mentioned with courage—because we are here to lead a country, that is our obligation, that is what we strove for, and we cannot eschew our responsibilities—there is widespread disenchantment with politicians and political parties.

That is a cause that lies at the bottom of the voter absenteeism problem. This view does not seek to justify this situation that would be the destruction of Venezuela's democratic system. Instead, all of us must make this reflection. We must do so to be able to begin to deal with the problem shaking us and being experienced by the countries of our region. We are living a time of crisis and a crisis is announced by the revision of values, situations, and the status quo. That is how we must regard it. And so, we have here the first lesson, which we must learn.

Caracas, for example, constitutes the center. We could call it the volcanic center of the country. The 22 February developments that affected us so much took place here. Here is the center or the heart of Venezuela's politics. Here are represented all the country's problems—poverty and the middle-class difficulties. All the problems are here in the capital city. The major news media have their offices here. And so, the Caracas voter absenteeism rate was the same as all the country. Take note that this was a national phenomena and describes the situation as I have outlined it. In Caracas, however, the Democratic Action party won by a wide margin—the government won as one would say. How could we explain the situation as put across by the reporter? Let us cast aside simple, opportunistic, or quick explanations and let us reflect on the lesson given to us by the people of Venezuela.

We will move on to something else now. I said at the governors' convention things that I again ratify. Yesterday already, some of the governors came by and the majority were from opposition parties. What did they come for? To quarrel with me? No, to tell me they were part of the government, to tell me they wanted and needed to fully cooperate. Therefore, let us not see this as a democratic catastrophe, on the contrary, a reaffirmation of Venezuelan democracy. This is one more experience we had to go through. We had already lived through the experience of the government being transferred from one party to another, but we had not had the experience of sharing the government with other political parties who had obtained power from the people. We once went through a stage of sharing the government through a coalition, not through the people's vote. This is, therefore, an extraordinary experience and confirms that we are at the threshold of a new Venezuela. This is what should make all Venezuelans feel optimistic and see the abstenteeism as a confrontation, because this should not happen again. If there had been 30 percent absenteeism—even 40 percent—we could have said, well, this happens in many countries, but absenteeism that surpasses 60 percent is very significant. It is not as if the absenteeism had occurred in Zulia, in Lara, or in the Federal District—no, it happened all over the country. This is what makes this absenteeism so important. One cannot make frivolous interpretations from this; instead, this is an important message and lesson from the people to their leaders—not only to the people's political leadership, but to their business leadership, their cultural leadership, and the way we have managed the freedom that the democratic system has given us. If some of us put up a giant screen of what has been said over the radio and television, what has been written in the press, what has been said at political rallies about what is occurring in Venezuela, we would start great convulsion—as the saying goes, no bone would be left unbroken. Politicians, businessmen, entrepreneurs, and intellectuals would all have to stand trial. The entire country has entered a sort of shredder that has created a sort of state of perplexity in Venezuela. As if this were not enough, 3 days prior to the elections, the Watchdog Commission [Tribunal de Salvaguarda]—making use of its legal and normal powers—issued arrest warrants against eight ministers. Let us look at what has been happening in the country during these last days and during this electoral process—the RECADI [Differential Exchange System] scandal—I am not here to pass judgment on values; I am not saying that this is either right or wrong; instead, looking at what we went through, here we see the electoral results. This brings us—basically those of us in Venezuela who direct

political, economic, and cultural activities—to reflect on ways we should administer our responsibility with the country, which we should not taint. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the size of the economic changes that Venezuelan society is being currently subjected to are difficult to understand and assimilate. All these are facts we have to admit.

All this contrasts with what we see in Latin America—we are once again facing the process of how Latin America is to be governed, which is making difficult the great democratic progress that all the area has enjoyed. This is the way we must see this situation. The fact there may be 8, 9, or even 10 opposition party governors is no longer important. They are no longer opposition members, they are now part of the government in their respective states, and they must show their solidarity with the national government. What does happen is that this creates a very important need for political pluralism to work at all levels. I am not going to say I feel happy about the absenteeism. It is a phenomenom I have just analyzed and that needs to be looked at in depth. I do feel satisfied that Venezuela is up against its definitive challenge. I said it during the electoral campaign—I am the first president that has proposed that the powers of the president of the Republic be reduced. I proposed that mayors and governors be elected. I also proposed the democratization of the parties' internal affairs and the modification of the law on political parties. At that time, I said Venezuela had entered a process in which its society could no longer live by the old patterns within which Venezuelan democracy was founded. We are now fully responsible for the construction of the Venezuela in which we all want to live. For that reason, we must all be optimistic.

[Heydra] Let us continue the news conference and give the floor to Alfredo Alvarez from EL NACIONAL.

[Alvarez] Good evening, Mr President. I will continue along the line of the elections and what the results of the elections held on 3 December meant to the country. All those who have commented on the degree of absenteeism in the 3 December elections said that if the majority of the voters had participated in the elections and absenteeism had been a lot lower, the government's defeat would have been much more overwhelming. Those comments have been made both by government opponents and even by Democratic Action Party spokesmen.

The votes cast last Sunday questioned the way politicians do politics. They questioned political leaders and they questioned the menu of candidates presented to them. Similarly, they also somehow questioned the work the current government has carried out up until now. Let us talk about responsibilities, Mr President. I would like to know, what is your government's degree of responsibility for the results obtained in the 3 December elections?

I would also like to use this occasion, Mr President, to insist on a topic that has been floating in the air for approximately 15 days. Obviously, the elections played down the importance of that topic a little bit. However, this week the topic went back to the newspapers' front pages. I am talking about the CTV's [Confederation of Venezuelan Workers] wage increase demand and the meaning of the economic package or of the group of economic measures your government is trying to implement. All those who commented on the government's economic measures, including government officials and friends and enemies of the government have agreed on one important thing: The economic package as it was proposed was necessary. They have agreed that we did not have any other choice except for the wage increases suggested within the package the government has been trying to implement since its installation.

It had been said that the only thing that could conspire against that package's success is the inclusion of ingredients that distort the true intention of the economic measures. We are basically talking about the wage increase policy, which was supposed to propose a minimum wage increase. Yesterday, we read in the newspapers that according to IMF guidelines, the wage increase cannot be higher than 20 percent. The CTV is demanding a 30-percent increase or a 50-percent increase if the increase is not applicable to social benefits.

That dynamic policy [the wage increase policy], which is exerting pressure—and the [words indistinct] said today that it would not let itself be cornered by the CTV—is adding a new ingredient to the economic package. There is too much pressure Mr President. What will be the margin of action we will have to handle that pressure and to deal with an exogenous ingredient to a package that should have been implemented just as it was formulated and as it was presented to us?

[Perez] First, let me tell you that I believe a very strange logic is being used—I do not intend to shirk my responsibilities, I will talk about that later—when it is said that if more people had voted, more people would have voted against the government. If the purpose of the elections had been to vote against the government, more people would have voted, of course, in order to overthrow it. But that was not the case here.

And I recall something that happened to me. I will not tell you where this happened. I toured several voting centers on Sunday, 3 December. There was one place where people started to run out to the balconies and windows of their apartments as I left one of those voting centers. I looked up because I heard them applauding. They shouted: But we did not vote! We did not vote!

On that day, I went to a meeting at a certain place in Venezuela—I will not say whether the meeting was in Caracas, or in this district or somewhere else. In any case, at that meeting some friends and partisans said: Look, friend, we did not vote, and they showed me that their fingers were not stained with ink. We did not vote,

because we will not betray the party. We did not want to vote for the candidate the party nominated.

I am giving you personal examples that showed me what happened on 3 December. It is one thing to have examples, but to come and try to be fortune tellers and say.... [changes thought] No. More people would have voted if things were different in the country and and if it were not experiencing the confusion that exists, for reasons some of you have mentioned. If more people had voted, they would not have voted necessarily against the government.

We could draw another conclusion. We could also say that partisans may have refrained from voting because they were bothered by internal party issues, as in the case I described to you before. They told me: Listen, we did not vote.

Those are, however, minor points and that is not what matters now. To start blaming one another is not what matters now. As I said in my first response, what matters now is to draw a lesson from all this. The Venezuelan people taught us a lesson here. There is no doubt about that. If we are unable to understand that, if we seek refuge in our self-sufficiency or in arrogant attitudes, then we are lost, because this is the way people make progress. People make progress by giving clear indications of what they think and believe, and the Venezuelan people gave clear indications to us in the elections. Let us not be so foolish as to give a simplistic explanation of what happened.

What is the government's share of responsibility in all this? Undoubtedly, the government has contributed to the state of confusion in society because of the lack of clear ways to respond to the magnitude of the current economic changes. There is no doubt about that. There is no doubt. But, as you said, the economic changes were necessary.

The economic situation may have had a lot to do with the low voter turnout, but not with the way people voted. Because if that had been the case, the people would have voted against the government. [sentence as heard]

You can also see that in most of the states where the Democratic Action Party [AD] lost, there were coalitions of all the other political forces. That is something that has not been mentioned. The opposition closed ranks to try to obtain the largest possible number of votes. That is another important development that occurred in these elections. In some areas it was the AD against practically all the other political parties combined. And each party has its supporters, as you know. Whenever there is a low voter turnout, the ones who vote are activists and independent people. This phenomenon should be studied very carefullly.

Part of the problem is the economic package. Undoubtedly, the economic package placed Venezuela in a very complex situation, because we have seen a total change in the country from one day to the next.

As you yourself said, the country understands the situation. We know that the people understand the situation. That is very important, because we realize that today's Venezuela is not the same Venezuela that existed 2, 3, or 4 years ago. A significant change is taking place in the Venezuelan people's awareness. That is also part of the phenomenon I am observing around me.

Look, if we sent Alfredo Alvarez to tour all the Latin American countries today—a hypothetical trip—he would come back perplexed because the same thing is happening everywhere else. Granted there are variations depending on the country, but it is the same thing nevertheless. We are, therefore, witnessing violent and profound changes in our society and our region, as well as in Europe and throughout the world.

This is the important thing. We must deal with the basic things instead of wasting our time with foolish things and with an internal debate to rid ourselves of a guilt so that others may shoulder it. No. Blame me for everything but listen to me. That is what I would tell you right now. Understand? We must necessarily view things in this way in the country.

Now, as I was saying, think for a moment. Even newspaper editors participated in the electoral campaign here in Caracas, and they gave the campaign a harsh antigovernment bias. Nevertheless, you saw how the people of Caracas reacted, even though this is where most of the newspapers are sold. I do not say this to pass the buck, but to reflect on the many things that have occurred throughout the electoral process in Venezuela. There is a lesson to be learned from this, and all lessons are beneficial. I believe Venezuela needed this process.

We were talking about the salary problem. This is part of the situation we are currently enduring. Who can deny—unless he is a cynic or insensitive to social problems—that salaries have dramatically deteriorated in Venezuela? This applies to the workers, peasants, and the middle class sector, too. Who can deny that the number of poor has increased; that the living standards of Venezuelans has declined? Who can deny this? One cannot possibly deny this.

The important thing, the essential thing, is that the dramatic situation we are currently withstanding will help us make reforms, change the country, and create another economy that improves things for everybody. That is what we are currently doing. When the workers say that they want a 50-percent salary increase, they are undoubtedly asking for the impossible, economically speaking, but it is not impossible if you take the country's situation into consideration. We have to balance this with the economy because we will be undoubtedly cutting the workers' salary if we grant a salary increase that is inflationary. The workers will be buying less with what they earn.

Moreover, we cannot use this as a pretext and say that we cannot increase the workers' salaries. No. The Venezuelan economy is capable of absorbing a salary increase

without inflation. This is related to the ability to increase supply at the same rate demand increases. That is what the economists and technicians.... [changes thought] This is where the economists are useful, and I agree with them on this even though I disagree with them on other things. They give us estimates that have been proven true because they can explain the effect of a pay increase on inflation.

We must give the salary increase in such a way that it does not ignite inflation. That is why we need consultations, and that is why I have always used consultations as the symbol or shield of the government's policy; and that is what we are doing.

I had a long meeting with Fedecamaras [Venezuelan Federation of Associations and Chambers of Commerce and Industry] last evening in my office. I heard their views and outlined my views. I told them that the way to find a solution was not by adopting a stubborn position or seeking a confrontation with the workers. I met with labor leaders this morning and I told them the same thing.

I am going to summon today or tomorrow a general meeting with the CTV, Fedecamaras, etc., to reach final conclusions on the matter. So, that is what we must determine. We must not see the situation in terms of whether we grant bigger or smaller increases; whether workers or businesmen won; whether the government lost or won. The situation here means that the big sacrifices we had to make in 1989 must not be for nothing. That is the problem we are dealing with.

[Heydra] Jesus Lozada Rondon of EL UNIVERSAL newspaper.

[Lozada] Good evening, Mr President. As you said, the past elections lend themselves to commentaries, reflections, rhetorical remarks, talk, and so forth. As a party man and AD militant, what do you think must happen in the AD, a party that fared badly in the elections? Anzoategui State, for example, has major figures such as Jaime Lusinchi, Octavio Lepage, Carlos Canache Mata, Jose Angel Ciliberto, and Tabata Guzman, and yet the party lost accross the board. I also wanted to ask: What does Venezuela expect from the meeting of presidents in Ecuador?

[Perez] I must speak as a head of state. That is my responsibility. I have the obligation to orient, to the extent possible, my fellow countrymen from any party or trend. I cannot adopt a partisan political view, although I do have my partisan responsibilities and although I must comment on what happened in the AD. I would say this is not an AD problem. All Venezuelan political parties must undertake a serious and in-depth revision of the country's political reality and the role parties are playing in the country's life, as the very future of democracy is involved in this. No doubt the low voter turnout rate reflects a widespread dissatisfaction with the political parties. We must not say this with satisfaction—and much less feel—this is something positive. This is a tremendously grave fact because political parties are basic elements for the existence of democracy.

For example, now that the East is opening up, what is happening? What are people saying? What is the great reform? What is perestroyka? It means that other parties must begin to be organized and that there will be no more single parties. Therefore, in any dimension, anywhere in the world, a political party is an essential factor for a system of liberty and for a democratic system to operate.

We cannot take facts at face value, either and say: How come in Anzoategui, where there is such a group of important political leaders, and why [word indistinct]? Look at this case. We would have some arguments in that case, too, and say we have to conduct a study. We won most of the mayoral elections in the state and almost all of the [word indistinct]. We won the mayoral races in Barcelona and Puerto La Cruz, which is where our candidate for governor was defeated. This is a very slow process, and in Anzoategui the AD will appear with more votes than the opposition parties, which won the governorship and was an alliance of parties.

That is why I am telling you that this is a very complex problem. We must use it as a lesson and draw conclusions. We must not try to protect the government or entertain feelings of predominance, and we must not try to place the blame on others. No, in this case, we can say that the country and the leading classes in all sectors are the major culprits in what has just happened. However, I say this as an assertion, not an accusation. This country entered this stage of profound and acute transformation, which has grown worse because of the economic adjustments. And it turns out that society, the people—as we say—have overtaken their institutions. The institutions must realize this now and measure up to their leadership functions in the country.

This is good. Deep down this is very positive because these are the clarion calls nations make on the basis of their peoples' extraordinary intuition. We have the strength here. Here, in Venezuela, among us, there is the strength to restore our country's well-being, flexibility, and capacity to advance. This is a time when we are obliged to do so. So, all political parties must begin finding internal solutions to their problems. There is not the slightest question that this is so.

Now we will talk about Ecuador. The Group of Eight has just concluded a meeting in Argentina where it studied and tried to carry out an in-depth study of the need to implement an integration process as soon as possible. Very important conclusions were reached. We did not achieve an integration. Among other things, we agreed to hold meetings—meetings between Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia—to begin what Argentina and Brazil began in the Southern Cone. We will seek ways to accelerate and energize the Latin American integration process. Now the five Andean countries—the five presidents of the Andean countries—have decided to meet in

Ecuador within the framework of the Andean Pact. This is something new in Latin America. The five Andean countries created the Andean Pact more than 20 or 30 years ago. The presidents of the Andean countries never met after the Andean Pact was created. At the time of my swearing in, the five presidents of the Andean countries met and decided to hold presidential meetings every 6 months to express our country's political will toward the process of integration and follow up on the integration process. This is why we are going to Ecuador. We are going to follow up on the integration process, make decisions to make the process advance, and we will continue to further study what was discussed at the 4-5 December meeting in Argentina. These are very useful and necessary meetings. The Venezuelan people must be convinced that the solutions to our country's problems are not within our borders. The solutions are based on the capacity of the Latin Americans to unite, form a group, and reach agreements; they are based on our capacity to base our policies on the political and economic decisions made in the world.

In these times, when we are seeing what is happening in the East; when Europe is turning its eyes to the East; when President Bush, in a firm tone of voice, a voice filled with real leadership, said: we are not going to sit down and applaud or criticize what is being done in the USSR; we are going to contribute so that President Gorbachev's changes will advance. When we see this happening around the world, we cannot remain calm and idle. We may be overlooked in that extraordinary process of change that is taking place around the world. In order to avoid this, we must meet and talk to the European presidents. We must make our presence felt and let them know we will not remain in the background while world decisions are being made. These are the important matters that will be discussed at the meeting in Ecuador.

[Heydra] Ministers Alejandro Izaguirre, Jesus Carmona, Carlos Blanco, Armando Duran, and Virgilio Avila Vives, governor of the Federal District, are with the president at this news conference.

[Perez] Minister Figueredo is also here.

[Heydra] Minister Figueredo and Pepe Consuegra are also here. Teresa Lomeli of Venevision is next.

[Lomeli] Good evening, Mr President. Allow me to continue with the subject of the elections. How will this cogovernment, involving regional and local leaders of other political parties, work? This is the first time that a government—a Democratic Action government in this case—must work with COPEI [Social Christian Party] governors, and more importantly with governors of MAS [Movement Toward Socialism], MEP [People's Electoral Movement], and Causa R [Radical Cause].

Also, Mr President, in view of the low voter turnout, review of electoral certificates, and exchange of accusations among political leaders, will the state reform move forward or should we view this as a test, as a political leader implied a few days ago?

[Perez] I believe that the election turned out as we all had expected. Since there are so many local and regional interests at play, the struggle is even more difficult and intense. The important thing is that the electoral system works. Operation Republic, headed by the Armed Forces, has again shown that it is advisable and necessary to guarantee impartiality.

There were vote-counting problems at the main center in Carabobo because the race between the two main candidates was very close. Operation Republic simply transferred the electoral certificates—with the approval of the Supreme Electoral Council—and found a solution to the problem there. Therefore, the honesty of the Venezuelan electoral process was confirmed.

There are more struggles and problems, because local electoral processes are gaining importance; because local euphoria is increasingly permeating the overall electoral process.

I told my three previous interlocutors and I told Alfredo Alvarez that if he took a tour of Latin America, he would find that other countries are doing the same thing. They are talking about or implementing state reform.

Therefore, this is not a theory; it is not an exclusively Venezuelan endeavor. It is the best evidence that our countries have changed for the better. We must adjust our institutions to the new social and economic reality of our nations.

State reform is not an idea of a pioneer or dreamer. Former President Jaime Lusinchi established the commission because he knew that our country had to do it. We recently hosted a forum to discuss state reform attended by all Latin American countries. We could say that we acted harmoniously, because we concurred on the need to implement state reform.

Recent developments promote state reform. After some reflection, parties and leaders involved in the most varied activities will agree that the Venezuelan people conveyed a positive message. I heard or read that some people claimed that people did not vote because they rejected the election of governors and mayors. For goodness sake! The curious thing is that despite all the enthusiasm, people failed to vote en masse. This is something significant that we must tackle head on; that we must analyze without fear, because our actions are sincere, because we are not cynics, because we are working for the country's well-being. This applies to those from other parties who were elected. What is our goal? What is the goal in the states of Bolivar, Anzoategui, Zulia, and Carabobo? Or in Caracas and the States of Monagas and Sucre? Venezuela. That is the single goal.

You say that there are different views about Venezuela? Fine, but when forced to sit together at a table, we must

reach a consensus, because we all have a responsibility toward Venezuela. We would have no problem in this regard. I reached this conclusion on 6 December when I greeted each candidate. They have not yet been confirmed, that is, they are not yet governors-elect, but we know that they will be installed as governors soon.

I told them that as soon as they are proclaimed governors-elect by the electoral boards, I will invite them to a breakfast at the Miraflores Palace for the first meeting between the head of state and the regional government of Venezuela and not with the representatives of COPEI, AD, MAS, or CAUSA R. This is clear and we need not worry about it. This will force us to pay more attention to other problems.

[Heydra] Alba Cecilia Mujica of Radio Caracas Television is next.

[Mujica] Good evening, Mr President, I have three questions for you. This news conference has been called in part to allow you to comment on the 3 December voter abstention. Many opinions have been voiced on this phenomenon. It has been said that the cause could have been the economic package; that the country voted against corruption; that the country voted to support the ruling of the Superior Court for the Protection of Public Patrimony; that they are tired of political parties. In your opinion, which one of these factors caused the low voter turnout?

[Perez] If it were not a blasphemy, I would say that it was the mystery of the Holy Trinity. [laughter]

[Mujica] Mr President, you said that former President Jaime Lusinchi established the [word indistinct] to bring about state reform, but he did not vote on Sunday, 3 December. This calls for a reflection. Also, Modesto Freites today filed [words indistinct] and if the Superior Court for the Protection of Public Patrimony upholds it, he could be released and sworn in in January. How could Modesto Freites become governor when justice and the country are pointing an accusing finger at him? I must point out that the State of Guarico did not accuse him because it elected him governor anyway.

Also, Mr President, you did not make clear whether a salary increase depends on the IMF and a letter of intent signed with the the IMF stating that there can be only a 20-percent increase. Fedecamaras is proposing a new 20- to 30-percent formula; a 3-month bonus beginning in 1990. My third question is...

[Perez, interrupting] Third question you say? I would say more like the umpteenth question. [laughter]

[Mujica] What is your opinion on the Supreme Court of Justice's decision to annul the Military Court's ruling in the El Amparo case?

[Perez] Let us deal with this in parts, because you have posed many questions. I have commented on all those topics in the past. They have all undoubtedly helped to create this state of confusion and tension in the country. That is my overall view.

I believe that it is unfair that Jaime Lusinchi was not able vote. This can happen in any country when a citizen is abroad and... [changes thought] We made a mistake. When we drafted the Electoral Law and established mandatory voting, we decided that Venezuelans who are abroad should be able to vote. However, though we allowed them to register at consulates, we did not allow them to vote. Therefore, we cannot blame Jaime Lusinchi or anyone else who was abroad at the time. We must improve our system. We must allow Venezuelans who are abroad to vote just as other countries allow their citizens abroad to vote.

As for the case of the Guarico State governor, a preventive arrest warrant was issued for him. This does not involve any kind of sentencing. The warrant was not issued for fraud, appropriation of funds, stealing, or embezzlement. He is being accused of a procedural violation. It is said that the foreign currency budget was disregarded. By the way, such a budget does not exist. That is what is being said. Therefore, no moral objections should be raised against him.

The universal theory of criminal law is that a person is innocent until proven guilty. Therefore, no moral objections should be raised against him. Of course, it must be decided whether Governor Modesto Freites is guilty as charged. If guilty, Freites would have to serve a jail sentence, and we would have to call a new gubernatorial election.

For the time being, he is the governor. The people of Guarico State are intelligent, because although the charges were unexpectedly made only 3 days before the elections, they elected Modesto Freites governor anyway.

Venezuela has an overall commitment with the IMF, an overall commitment with the international financial system. We do not have to ask them for permission to do this or that. However, the day we are told that our inflation can no longer be controlled and that Venezuela has no way out, then, on that day, we will have lost our international credit, we will have lost our luck with the IMF, and we will head for catastrophe. What happened in Brazil and Argentina? What happened to Mexico in the past? They reached agreements. They instituted the crusado and the astral and a boom followed. But what happened after that? The governments crumbled under the pressures, there was a recession, and catastrophe followed. That is an experience we should learn from, and this is why I say that I am willing to talk, discuss, understand, and make any correction that has to be made, but not to change the direction of the plan because, like EL NACIONAL reporter Alvarez said, everyone agrees on this because this is the only path the Venezuelans have if we really want to rescue the country,

grow, and look after the well-being of all the people. Therefore, that is.... [changes thought]

Regarding the issue of wages, we are not imposing anything. The only imposition is being made by the numbers. I have said that the economists speak the absolute truth when they speak of this, and in this matter I do believe in the economists' witchcraft. They can clearly tell us: Look, if you raise wages by this or that amount, the inflation rate will increase by this or that amount, and this or that will happen. That is what we have to do and we cannot fool or let the workers be fooled, nor can we hinder the country's production and productivity growth. That is what we must seek to do.

Regarding the El Amparo decision, for example, I congratulate the court because we know that they made the ruling a few days ago. The ruling is not made the same day the... [changes thought] I congratulate it for announcing its ruling after the elections because this would have created another element of unrest for the electoral process. However, I am very pleased because I, as president of the Republic, was the one who ordered the military prosecutor to appeal the court-martial ruling before the Supreme Court of Justice because I believe that this is an incident that must be clarified before the eyes of the people. If we want to regain our trust in politics and politicians, our faith in democracy, then we must solve the El Amparo case in such a way that there are no doubts. It must be clearly solved. If there was a crime involved, it must be known. This would not discredit democracy, it would strengthen democracy because everyone would know that we are determined that anyone who commits a crime be punished, despite the reason for the crime. This is what is important, and now we are again faced with the need to investigate this issue in depth so that the truth will prevail. A situation like this one honors democracy. These are the positive facts that the newspapers should stress in their editorials, facts that the politicians should talk about. Just like they said that this was a mess, that we were going to cover up the El Amparo incident, now they should say: that was not the case. Justice may be slow—there are many things involved—but, in the long run, justice prevails. In the end, the results were those that the country expected; that is why I, interpreting the feelings of the people, asked the military prosecutor to appeal the ruling before the Supreme Court of Justice.

[Heydra] Viktor Globa, TASS correspondent in our country, is making his debut at today's news conference.

[Globa] Good evening, Mr President. Do you think the problems of the region will be solved during the upcoming summit in San Jose?

[Perez] I have participated actively and spent nights and days talking to the presidents until I finally managed to get them all to agree that Costa Rica should host the summit. I am not doing this for sentimental reasons or because I like to meddle in the domestic affairs of other countries. I do it because it is necessary and vital for Venezuela. If the Central American situation is not solved, then Latin American will be confronting a much more serious crisis. It would mean war and it would mean foreign intervention in the Central American problem.

Even the process of world detente, in which the weaker peoples, the smaller peoples, the Latin American peoples, have placed so much hope and faith, is being jeopardized by this situation. Whether we like it or not, the East - West conflict has interfered strongly in the Central American conflict. We saw how this subject was crucial during the Malta summit. We heard President Gorbachev clearly say that they are not meddling nor do they wish to meddle in the Central American situation. He said that they want an end to regional conflicts and that they want the problems to be solved through an election, with votes. We also heard President Bush say that Soviet weapons are getting into Central America. I cannot doubt leader Gorbachev's words, but Soviet weapons are getting into Central America. Dangerous factors are involved in this matter. If the USSR is not sending those weapons, if the USSR bans the use of its weapons outside the countries to which they have been sent, then someone else is involved and other interests are involved. I do not wish to expand on this; however, these things threaten world detente and also threaten peace and democracy in Central America. We are dealing with a very dangerous phenomenon.

This has much to do with the question asked by the TASS correspondent. What is going to happen in San Jose? If foreign powers—be it the United States, Cuba, the USSR, or any other foreign power—persist in hindering the direct analysis and friendly solution among the Central American presidents, this summit will end without results. If the Central American presidents are allowed to act freely and if they know that they will not have the support of any power to get weapons or money, the San Jose summit will return things to the way they were after Esquipulas II and Tela. That is what we are hoping will happen. That is what the Group of Eight requested in a document on the Salvadoran problem. There is no doubt that the Salvadoran crisis came at the most inopportune moment, when things were going so well. And the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] is greatly to blame for this because they launched the offensive and those who gave the FMLN the weapons to launch this operation—a major operation from the military perspective—are also to blame for this. However, the Salvadoran Government must answer for what happened to the Jesuit priests. Just as we all reacted with anger to the outbreak of violence in El Salvador, we also reacted with anger when we learned of the infamous manner in which the six Jesuit priests were murdered. This must also be clarified.

Therefore, I am optimistic, but also concerned, about the results of the San Jose summit.

[Heydra] We continue with the news conference. UPI correspondent Alberto Garnica now has the floor.

[Garnica] Good evening, Mr President. Mr President, you were very pleased when the Berlin Wall was torn down and welcomed the changes being made around the world on the eve of a new decade. However, the eyes of the U.S. investors, the banks, and the U.S. Government itself are on Eastern Europe. What do you think the outcome of the Latin American problems will be in light of its enormous debt? What do you think the outcome of Venezuela's problems will be in the next decade?

Also, Mr President, Salvadoran sources have said that the FMLN rebels sent you a letter asking for your good offices before President Alfredo Cristiani. They have asked for a meeting in Caracas to negotiate peace in El Salvador prior to the Central American presidential summit. Will you do it, Mr President?

[Perez] The tearing down of the Berlin wall is of extraordinary and real symbolic significance. It is the final proof that the two blocs into which humankind had divided itself are determined to coexist. In Malta, President Bush said that they are on the threshold of a new world relationship and understanding between the United States and the USSR. This has also given President Gorbachev the opportunity to continue his extraordinary policy that will go down in history with a very special meaning. Gorbachev had the courage and determination to open the doors to world peace and understanding.

A new outlook has been opened to the whole world. Eastern Europe's economy has been undermined by the centralization of the planning process and by everything else done by the the Marxist-Leninist system. Now Eastern Europe needs immediate and substanital aid from the other European nations to get the people's support. The USSR also needs strong economic support from the United States, Japan, and Europe. This is already evident. Gorbachev has just visited Italy, where he accepted loans of $25 billion for the USSR.

This is very important, but here we go back to the question asked by UPI newsman Garnica: Does this affect America? Yes, it might affect Latin America. However, it is up to us whether we are affected or not. And here we return to the need for dialogue among ourselves and for an enhancement of our negotiating power to face this new situation, which in general is very positive but which has some negative aspects in terms of Latin America's possible position. I have already mentioned this.

However, despite all this, I see the situation as positive because, at the same time, what is going to happen? There are going to be more resources available among the industrialized nations, which will allow them to engage in financial exchanges with all areas of the world, because what was being spent on weapons—which were truly astronomical amounts—will now be reduced to more and more rational levels. Those resources will be fed to international financial activities. Within that financial activity, European nations will pay much attention to Eastern Europe but will get little in return, and they are interested in increasing their Third World markets to be able to maintain their economic growth and to find replacements for the military complexes in all these countries that were created and maintained during the post-war period in preparing for World War III. We have good weapons, arguments, and sound positions at our command, because we are in a critical situation, but we are not a bunch of poor souls. We own many of the resources mankind needs. We have a market of 400 million people. These countries need that market.

So, everything is not negative for us, and if we know how to take advantage of this circumstance, we are going to win because everyone is going to profit from this new international reality that has begun to emerge following the end of the Berlin wall.

As I said before, I have been directly involved, with all my Latin American and Venezuelan spirit, in the events in Central America. I received a letter from the FMLN asking not for a meeting to be held here, but asking me to relay to the presidents now meeting in Costa Rica their position as to the advisability of reaching a cease-fire under international verification. This has been the position of the FMLN for quite some time but the Salvadoran Government has rejected it for several reasons. The FMLN had other comments, which I have already relayed to President Arias as the host of the meeting, for him to present to the Central American presidents.

I am now considering how to respond to the FMLN to also ask them to be more flexible and to open all possibilities because all Latin Anmerica is at stake.

[Heydra] To end this press conference, we will now present the PANORAMA newspaper's provincial reporter [not further identified].

[Reporter] I understand you are going to visit Zulia again on the coast. On the 75th anniversary of PANORAMA, you promised to attend the swearing in of the new governor, Oswaldo Alvarez Paz. I want to ask you something. Alvarez campaigned along the same lines you did as a candidate. He said once that 80 percent of his government program will be the same as yours. Yesterday, when he came to the Presidency, he said that he is no longer in the oppositon but with the government. President Caldera and the Miranda governor-elect were very cautious and prudent, while COPEI [Social Christian Party] Secretary General Eduardo Fernandez on Sunday increased his attacks against the government.

Is there going to be cooperation between COPEI, or a sector of COPEI and the government, and, in the case of Zulia in particular, how are you going to cooperate with Alvarez Paz' government?

[Perez] In the first place, I will hold a dialogue. On 13 December, I am going to the east coast to swear in the Presidential Commission for the Development of the

East Coast of Maracaibo Lake, and I will also discuss the program that we are going to conduct on the east coast.

I could have done this a few days before the elections. However, in view of my position—and so that it would not be said that I was trying to get votes for my party—I put it off until now. I am using the opportunity that it is the 50th anniversary of Ciudad Ojeda to do this. I am going there, and it will be a very important event. I will then go to Maracaibo to attend the swearing in of Governor Alvarez Paz. I will also attend the swearing in of Governor Tablante; the swearing in of Governor Salas Romo in Carabobo; and the swearing in of Andres Velasquez, the governor of Bolivar State. Therefore, I will visit a number of governors and will also visit other governors in places where my party, the AD, won. Now then, I am trying to see what I can do —depending on the assistance I get, the dates that are set, and the flight schedules—to be in all these places because the swearing in of the governors does not have to be on the same day.

I am doing this because this is a way to show that there is a single government, that the political fray and struggle among parties is always present everywhere, but that this is part of the government's responsibility on a national and a regional level. As a matter of fact, regarding this question by PANORAMA [words indistinct] Carabobo, that all those who beat the government... [changes thought] Some say that Osvaldo Patti was saying good things there about my government and won. [laughter]

Well, as I say, there is no difficulty in this. I am going to offer my program for the 5-year term in Zulia. A major collaborator in it will be Governor Alvarez Paz, and I am bound by the Constitution and my own good faith to give full cooperation to governors of all states without regard to the party to which they belong. This must be an extremely clear and extremely honest relationship because, if it is not, we would not be harming COPEI, Causa R, or MAS; we would be harming Venezuela. This is one doubt that must be clearly dispelled.

By the way, the Congress—and in this I am not referring to one but all the parties—because of the electoral question, delayed approval of the law on employment, which is so important to solve the situation of the public services that are in such a sorry state. Well, it was finally approved yesterday. However, the ones who will receive the full benefit of the law on employment will be the future governors because the full burden of that law has been left... [changes thought] I am happy that they will get off to a good start. I do not care if some are not AD members and belong to other parties. However, they will have the resources and the money to do many of the things all regions are urgently demanding. Well, this makes me happy also because this is the way we ought to govern.

I think—and this way I will delve deeper into PANORAMA's question—that this will also force COPEI—and AD, too—to attach more importance to the need to establish ways to cooperate in order to be able to forge ahead with the difficult measures and difficult programs the national government must implement. Therefore, this is another positive aspect that will be at play in Venezuelan politics next year.

Gentlemen, I hope I have satisfactorily answered the questions of these very active and intelligent reporters, and especially the questions of my dear compatriots who are listening to me over Venezuelan television and radio, and those of the foreigners who live on our soil. I want them to send to their countries the message that this is a great country, that this country is moving forward, and that what has just happened is a symbol of Venezuela's transformation process.

Army Commander Denies Officers' Insubordination

PA0912044889 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0352 GMT 9 Dec 89

[Text] Caracas, 8 Dec (EFE)—Today, Venezuelan Armed Forces Commander General Carlos Penaloza denied media reports indicating that top echelon officers had been arrested for insubordination.

"It is entirely false that 11 Army officers have been arrested and transferred due to acts of insubordination and unacceptance of the electoral results in the states of Aragua and Bolivar," said Penaloza.

He added that Venezuelan officers are "completely respectful of the people's will, expressed with votes."

The first direct Venezuelan elections for governors, mayors, and municipal officials were held on Sunday, 3 December. These elections registered an absenteeism rate of 65 to 70 percent. Leftist candidates won in Aragua, Bolivar, and Anzoategui States.

Carlos Tablante of the Movement for Socialism won in Aragua, the most important Venezuelan state from a military point of view, and Union Leader Andres Velazquez won in Bolivar, where the basic iron and aluminium industries and the main hydroelectric center are located.

Guyana

PNC Supports Hoyte on 'Portuguese Mafia'

FL1112134689 Bridgetown CANA in English 2207 GMT 10 Dec 89

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Dec 10, CANA—NEW NATION, a newspaper published by the ruling People's National Congress (PNC), declared Sunday that members of the PNC are standing in "iron ranks" behind their leader, President Desmond Hoyte and the remarks he made recently about a "Portuguese Mafia" operating in Guyana.

In an address to a rally at the bauxite mining town of Linden two Sundays ago [26 Nov], President Hoyte had named a number of persons as being members of a mafia which he said has a "congenital disrespect" for and

wants once again, to rule over "black and coolie (Indian) people" as they did during the colonial era.

Those named were director and editor-in-chief of the privately-owned STABROEK NEWS newspaper David de Caires; Jesuit priests Andrew Morisson of the CATHOLIC STANDARD, official organ of the Roman Catholic Church here and Malcolm Rodrigues of the University of Guyana; and attorney-at-law and director of STABROEK NEWS, Miles Fitzpatrick.

NEW NATION gave five reasons why the PNC was "standing by every word".

It said those who have been attacking the president for his remarks have "deliberately resorted to gross distortion and misrepresentation and have maliciously taken out of their proper context" the president's remarks.

It contended further that Hoyte's statements were couched in the vernacular which is usual at rallies and meetings such as the one at Linden and which in no way can be construed as, or meant to be pejorative.

In addition, Hoyte, it said, was "using the opportunity once again to condemn those who were employing various strategems to foment racial disharmony, polarise the major ethnic groups and create racial tension in the country".

NEW NATION also listed what it said were attempts to assassinate President Hoyte's character, undermine his authority and weaken the national confidence in him, and the PNC's long record of working steadfastly for racial unity in Guyana as reasons for standing firmly behind the president.

It added: "In the meantime, the party, understanding the proper context in which the leader spoke, stands in iron ranks behind the comrade leader. We believe that the time has come to expose those who seek to cause confusion and sow division among the guyanese people.

"To this task, we rededicate ourselves".

PPP Official Says Racial Propaganda Continues

FL1112132189 Bridgetown CANA in English 1946 GMT 10 Dec 89

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Dec 10, CANA— Opposition People's Progressive Party [PPP] executive member Clinton Collymore has said that "racial propaganda is generating a black backlash" in the multi-racial Guyanese society. Collymore was declaring open a one-day symposium on "Race and Class - The National and International Dimensions," sponsored by the party.

"The long history of institutionalised racial domination and divide and rule tactics has left a colonial legacy of a wide range of stereotypical luggage militating against coloured people, particularly black people who are being told in Guyana today through various covert and overt and subtle ways that they are inadequate in the economic, cultural, political, managerial and social spheres," Collymore told the small audience at the Pegasus Hotel.

He added: "these are devastating concepts to impact on the black psyche. This type of racial propaganda is generating a black backlash and black intransigence and black assertiveness which can only serve to strengthen the grip of the ruling party (the People's National Congress) [PNC] on the levers of state power." The PNC, he added, "is not averse to fuelling this sentiment or egging on this type of propaganda." And, in this respect he pointed to recent controversial remarks by PNC leader, President Desmond Hoyte, in an address to a rally at the bauxite mining town of Linden where the population is overwhelmingly black and which is considered by the PNC as one of its strongholds.

In his address to a rally there, President Hoyte had named four persons as being members of a Portuguese mafia which he said has a "congenital disrespect" for, and which wants to rule over "black and coolie (Indian) people" as was the case during the colonial days.

Collymore was critical of Hoyte's remarks which he said represented "a desperate appeal to black consciousness to forego class interests and to rally to the sinking PNC ship of state." He added: "Most black people (in Guyana) are proletarians, peasants and marginalised petty bourgeois. They will have to decide this race and class issue for themselves, taking their children's bleak future into consideration...".

PPP leader, Dr. Cheddi Jagan, also referred to President Hoyte's remarks about a "Portuguese mafia" and sought to give an historical analysis of the conflict. He contended that when the PNC came to power in 1964 after forming a coalition government with the mainly Portuguese United Force (UF) then headed by big industrialist, the late Peter d'Aguiar, in class terms, there was an alliance of the bourgeoisie and the upper and middle sections of the petty-bourgeoisie.

However, contradictions based on race and class developed and eventually led to the break-up of the PNC-UF coalition, with the then PNC leader, Forbes Burnham using "his superior political power to upset the hierarchical administrative structure based on race - white, Portuguese, coloured, black in descending order," Dr. Jagan said.

Dr. Jagan said that by giving blacks preference in appointments and promotion, Burnham "corrected an historical injustice" but this created tensions within the UF and the contradictions that developed finally led to the coalition being ruptured. The PNC, he added, proceeded to establish bureaucratic/state capitalism in Guyana and "virtually eliminated" the Portuguese, Chinese, and Indian commission agents, wholesalers and small shopkeepers. The PPP leader contended further that with Burnham's death in 1985 and Hoyte's

assuming the leadership of the PNC, "the black bureaucratic bourgeoisie have become insecure because of pressures to dismantle the state sector economy."

Dr. Jagan also contended that the non-black petty-bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie still harbour memories of the way they were sidelined and in recent years, they have "assumed a position of cooperation and confrontation—co-operation on class grounds for the sharing of the spoils; confrontation on ethnic-cultural grounds (for) there is dissatisfaction with the discriminatory policies of the PNC." He contended that "there is no serious racial problem (in Guyana) today," but the PPP "is aware of fears of racial insecurity" in the Guyanese society.

It was partly because of this awareness, he said, that even if the PPP should win a free and fair election, it will form a government involving the members of the Patriotic Coalition for Democracy (PCD), a five-member grouping of opposition political parties formed in January 1986 to campaign for electoral reforms in Guyana. He said the PPP will not dominate any such PCD government and will implement a consensus PCD programme.

GTUC Demonstrates Against IMF Visit

FL0812182889 Bridgetown CANA in English 1753 GMT 8 Dec 89

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Dec 8, CANA—The Guyana Trades Union Congress (GTUC) Friday continued a demonstration against a visit by a team from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for talks with the government.

The placard-bearing demonstrators outside the Bank of Guyana building were led by GTUC President Frank Andrews and General Secretary Joseph Pollydore. The IMF team is reviewing the performance of the economy under a one-year Guyana-IMF monitored programme.

Trade unionists here fear that another devaluation of the Guyana dollar is likely as a result of the IMF visit. Pollydore told CANA that in the face of much talk about the possibility of a further devaluation of the Guyana dollar from the present 33 Guyana dollars to 41 for one U.S. dollar, the TUC believed that the time was "opportune... to take pre-emptive action". "We oppose devaluation on principle", he said.

Pollydore said the 70 per cent devaluation of the Guyana dollar in April this year resulted in "unbearable conditions in the country".

"There are many homes today which are finding it difficult to get regular meals. Prices are high. The food may be there but people just cannot afford to buy", Pollydore said. He said a further devaluation of the dollar will result in a halt to the government's Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) and "destroy everything here".

The Guyana Government says it has no plan to further devalue its currency.

The demonstrations have so far attracted about a dozen members of the GTUC Executive Council. Pollydore said participation has been restricted to executive members. He said that after Friday's protest a decision would be taken as to whether the demonstrations should continue until the IMF team leaves the country.

Government, Booker Sign Agreement on Guysuco

FL1112222289 Bridgetown CANA in English 2049 GMT 11 Dec 89

[Excerpts] Georgetown, Guyana, Dec 11, CANA—The Guyana Government and Booker Plc, the former owners of Guyana's nationalised sugar industry, on Monday signed a memorandum of understanding in which they have agreed to work toward the development of a "fully detailed agreement" during the first half of next year. A statement from the Ministry of Planning and Development said the detailed agreement will make arrangements for Booker Tate to provide management services and technical assistance to the currently wholly state-owned Guyana Sugar Corporation (Guysuco). It will also make possible a range of investments in Guysuco through equity and loans—including the conversion of the Guyana Government's debt to Booker.

The government and Booker will also work together to enlarge the equity participation in Guysuco to include share holdings by the corporation's estimated 20,000 workers and by other private institutions and individuals—domestic and foreign, including guyanese nationals resident overseas.

The two parties will also seek to secure "international institutional investment" and foreign loans and technical assistance for Guysuco. Bookers' extensive sugar and other interests in Guyana were nationalised by the Guyana Government in 1976. However, as part of a new thrust by the Desmond Hoyte administration to make the strategic nationalised sugar and bauxite industries, "technologically current" and managerially efficient and to ensure that they have access to markets, negotiations have been opened with the former foreign operators in both industries. [passage omitted]

The Ministry of Planning and Development said the Booker memorandum "is based on the spirit of equitable treatment". It said the two parties have committed themselves "to the principle of allocating the net benefits of the re-organised sugar industry on the basis that the non-Guyanese participants' benefits will increase over the current levels only in step with improved physical and financial performance by the industry". It said that the prime objective of co-operation between the Guyana Government and Booker will be to enhance the performance of the local sugar industry so that it could produce about 250 000 long tons of sugar annually. [passage omitted]

Monday's agreement was signed by Guyana's Deputy Prime Minister, Planning and Development, William Haslyn Parris and Chairman of Booker Sir Michael Caine who Monday ended a five-day visit to Guyana. He was accompanied by Managing Director of the Booker Sugar Company Allan Foster.

Marxist Leader Welcomes Changes in East Europe

FL0812235889 Bridgetown CANA in English 2205 GMT 8 Dec 89

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Dec 8, CANA—Guyana's Marxist/Leninist opposition People's Progressive Party (PPP) on Friday welcomed the democratic changes taking place in the socialist world, especially Eastern Europe.

In a brief statement issued here, the PPP, which is led by Dr. Cheddi Jagan, also said it is "alarmed at the disclosures of corruption in some socialist countries". The PPP said it was also alarmed at the replacement of democratic methods of rule by bureaucratic/administrative methods in some of the socialist states as in Guyana.

The party said the process of democratisation and openness taking place in the socialist world is in keeping with the programmes and policies enunciated by the PPP from its inception.

"The PPP always stood for the rule of law based on constitutional fundamental human rights, a plural political/ideological system, separation of the party from the state and government and periodic free and fair elections", the statement said. It added: "There can be no development and social progress with extravagance and corruption and lack of democracy and openness, whether in the capitalist West or the socialist East". And singling out reforms in the Soviet Union for special mention, the PPP said these reforms "are clearly intended to build a democratic and humane socialism."